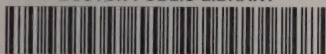
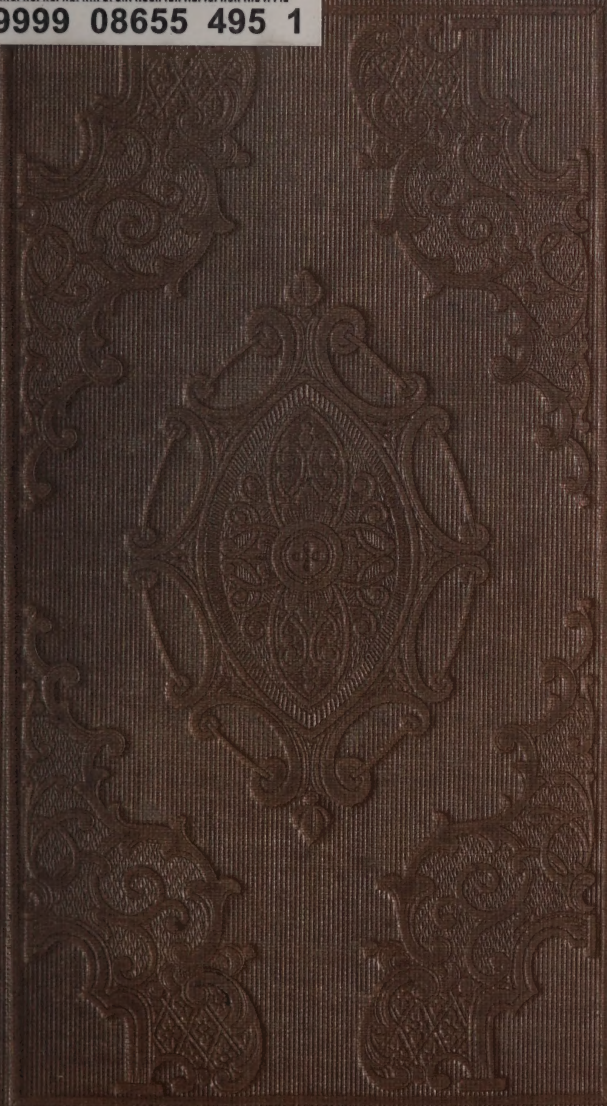


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THE DIETETICS OF THE SOUL.

THE DIETETICS

THE SOUL

ERNEST VON RICHTER, M.D.

THE DIETETICS OF THE SOUL

TRANSLATED BY

ERNEST VON RICHTER, M.D.

NEW YORK

G. B. FRANKS & CO., 105 BROADWAY

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THE DIETETICS

OF

THE SOUL.

BY

ERNEST VON FEUCHTERSLEBEN, M. D.

VALERE AUDE!

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EDITOR'S PREFACE.

THE Editor has not thought it necessary to present the English reader with translations of the short prefaces which Feuchtersleben prefixed to the seven editions through which this popular little book has already passed in Germany. Thus much, however, may be selected from them:—that the desultory and irregular manner in which the author has treated his subject is mainly owing to his having been unwilling to repeat what had been already said, and well said, by others; and that he does not profess to teach morality in the wide sense of the word, however closely

some may think it relates to self-control. In short, he offers his book as a mere contribution to practical Moral Philosophy, the originality and usefulness of which may excuse its incomplete and fragmentary character.

As regards the Editor, while he ventures to hope that his task has been so executed as to present the English public with an accurate and readable version of the original, he feels impelled to add a word or two in deference to the perhaps laudable scruples with which some may at first regard a work having for its title—a literal translation of the original—"THE DIETETICS OF THE SOUL."

He trusts it is unnecessary to say that the Christian will find in this book nothing contradictory to, or incompatible with, any part of his faith.

The word "Soul" in the title might, in

the estimation of some, perhaps, have been better replaced by that of "Mind;" but, to say nothing of the obligation which an Editor lies under, to translate his Author as literally as possible, and without entering into long metaphysical disquisitions, he at once confesses that he gives a decided preference to the word "Soul." Etymological derivation, and the authority of some of the greatest Philosophers, concur in regarding it as the best, and indeed the only, term our language offers for that individual living essence which includes and contains within itself, rather than is the sum of, all our intellectual power. Indeed, the limited import of the word "Mind," renders it almost a misfortune that it should, through fashion, have been so generally adopted. For the almost superstitious reverence with which many regard "Soul," as the

name of that immortal principle which is the object of all religious culture, often makes them, as it were, eager to refer the internal phenomena of which they are conscious, to any but their true seat and source.

However this may be, still less objection can lie to the term "Dietetics" as applied to the Soul. There are clearly materials of internal life, as indispensable to the soul as food is to the body; so that these two undeniable propositions suffice to justify the use of the word. The analogy is so happy that the Editor cannot help pushing it a little further, and adding, with all reverence, that to diet minor ailments of the Soul, is not to pretend to a knowledge of its more serious diseases, far less to encroach upon the province of Religion.

On the whole there is perhaps little risk

of this treatise being misunderstood or condemned by those who read it aright. And even did it profess to be, what it expressly disclaims, a work on morality, the noble lines of Milton might suffice to show that the most fervent and enthusiastic believer in Revelation need not scorn the assistance of those faculties which are inherent to man, as the gift of his Creator.

“Mortals that would follow me,
Love virtue; she alone is free;
She will teach you how to climb
Higher than the sphery chime.
Or, if virtue feeble were,
Heaven itself would stoop to her.”

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION	13
II. THE IDEA—GENERAL ACTIONS OF THE MIND .	19
III. BEAUTY THE REFLECTION OF HEALTH . . .	35
IV. IMAGINATION	45
V. WILL—CHARACTER—INDECISION—ILL-HUMOUR —DISTRACTION	65
VI. UNDERSTANDING—CULTURE	79
VII. TEMPERAMENTS—PASSIONS	96
VIII. THE AFFECTIONS	110
IX. OSCILLATION	120
X. HYPOCHONDRIASIS	136
XI. NATURE—TRUTH	151
XII. RESUMÉ	161
XIII. PASSAGES FROM A DIARY	173

I.

INTRODUCTION.

We become popular by affecting to be less intellectual than we really are.—BULWER.

WE live in stormy and unsettled times. Hence we may confer a benefit, not only on ourselves, but on others, by diverting attention from the exciting circumstances of the present day—from the disheartening eccentricities of a literature which meanders in a thousand frivolous directions—to the calm regions where the inner man, self-examined, submits himself to moral treatment. Here our connexion with things, our object, our duty, become clear; and, while we quietly separate ourselves from a world which is unable to assure us of anything, we feel that the joy we thought lost again returns, and that a second innocence spreads its clear and tran-

quillizing light over human existence. The child may amuse himself with childish rhymes. Man should find his recreation in reflecting on his relation to the things of this life. To all has this power been vouchsafed; by all should it be exercised.

“Our authors,” says the Baron von Sternberg, “no longer write in their own chambers, but in the open market-place. Hence we find so much noise, and dust, and highway reality in their works; but this is attained at the expense of that profundity of thought and clearness of expression which distinguished the writings of our forefathers. Hence, likewise, the haste which now-a-days hurries us onward. The philosopher, lest he remain behind in the race, publishes his ideas, and the poet his fancies; each being content when he produces a violent and instantaneous effect on the public. Yet who has time to grow old himself, or compose works which remain ever youthful?”

The following pages have been written to correct the tendencies just alluded to. They have been conceived in the spirit of repose—for

self-cure and for self-meditation; and it is thus they must be read, if the reader would derive any benefit from them.

In weaving together ethics and dietetics, I have endeavoured to give a practical demonstration of the power which the mind exercises over the body. "Physicians," people say, "are strongly opposed to all attempts to make their art popular—to all self-study of our own complaints. They fear, it would seem, lest the uncertainty and insufficiency of medical experience should cause us to lose all confidence in their knowledge. It is their interest to keep us in the dark." So reasons the public, and a modern professional writer is of the same opinion. But even admitting all this, is it to *our* advantage alone so to act? If confidence in your medical attendant has contributed to your cure, are you less cured than if iron or bark had effected your recovery? Is not Faith a powerful agent? Are we deceived when we find that it renders us as much service as the physician himself? Shall we be forbidden to attain the knowledge of acting for ourselves, or to direct the art of self-deception to any useful end, when we know that

it works such wonders. It is the object of the following pages to communicate whatever may be learned of this act of the mind. The practical application must be left to the individual reader.

I have aimed at popularity in the best sense of that term. The truly popular writer never sinks into the vulgar crowd. He rather raises the masses by bringing the highest subjects within their comprehension, making them, without a show of erudition, easily understood; and by elevating ordinary material knowledge to the true purposes of education by his practical method and vivid illustrations, he co-operates with Providence itself. Labouring at the great work of humanity he first matures the intelligence of a select few, from whom he then spreads it over the whole earth—just as the streak of day above the mountain-tops gradually illuminates the valleys and the plains.

The frequent quotation of the important words used by truly great men is intended to show how greatly both theory and experience have always flowed from one and the same conviction—how strongly the most diverse results

coerce belief—and that my opinions are neither singular nor new. But, alas! many things are still new; and we may safely affirm that of all arts none is so neglected by man as the one I here inculcate—the art of self-control. Yet is it the first and the last of his moral duties.

Nothing will contribute more effectually to the practical application of the precepts which I here enforce, than the faithful study of a diary, composed of short, but true and fruitful fragments. It is an acute and correct remark, that what we commonly take for genius is nothing but a constant communion with oneself. The paragraphs which conclude this work (p. 173) are taken from such a diary.

At the present day much stress is laid on this species of erudition. Every opinion we offer must bear the stamp of authority. Albums are formed with extracts from celebrated writers, the autographs of well-known persons are collected; and to render a work attractive it must contain numerous citations. Hence, I have extracted passages from several authors;

though I doubt if their well-meant reflections will succeed in restoring to health a single hypochondriac. Suffice it if they do not render hypochondriacal those who are not so.

II.

THE IDEA—GENERAL ACTIONS OF THE MIND.

Mind is united to matter, but matter is also united
to mind.

UNDER the term "Dietetics of the Soul" I would comprehend a knowledge of those means by which the soul is preserved in a state of health. This knowledge constitutes morality; and although all the mental efforts of man tend towards the same great aim of cultivating and fostering his mental sense—the bloom of his life, the object of his existence—yet I would here especially consider that power of the mind by which it is enabled to avert the ills that threaten the body—a power the reality of which has hardly ever been denied; whose wonders have frequently excited astonishment; whose laws are rarely investigated; and whose agency is still more rarely brought to bear on practical

life. Yet every force derived from the spring of mental life may be cultivated by the hand of man until it becomes an art. Art is cultivated ability; and if man is advanced so far as to convert even life itself into an art, why should he not do the same for health, which is the life of his life? This is "the Dietetics of the Soul"—the soul of dietetics, as one of my commentators has aptly designated it—of which I propose to treat—not in a complete essay, but in fragmentary remarks.

Kant examined "the power of the mind to master morbid feelings by the mere force of resolution." I would go still further than this; and show not only how the feelings, but the access of disease itself, may be controlled. The body is frequently the only channel through which we can assist the mind; but why may we not sometimes influence the former through the latter? It may be that neither medical men nor the public—and here each man should be his own physician—have bestowed on this matter the attention which it merits.

"Happy duality of human nature," exclaims an accomplished authoress, "thou alone preservest the unity of our being; the animal sup-

ports the spirit, the spirit the animal; and thus alone man exists."

My object in the present work is to explain how this spiritual portion of man may be protected from disease. I do not offer any definite or conclusive theory. This it were too much to expect on a subject, which, like all mental—I might add *vital*—phenomena, eludes our grasp as often as we flatter ourselves that we have it secured. The thanks of my readers must rather be due to me for having sacrificed the empty gratification of building up a system to the reproach of rhapsodism, which may possibly be offered to my sketches.

There are circumstances under which we gain but little by endeavouring to gain too much. Physiognomy may, perhaps, be included under this head; and I shall, therefore, following the example of Lavater in physiognomy, content myself with fragmentary remarks on the dietetics of the soul. But to avoid the error of that learned Royal Society, which disputed whether a cup of water, together with the fish in it, did not weigh heavier than the same cup of water without the fish, neglecting previously to ascertain whether such were actually the fact

—to avoid this error I shall pause for a moment on *that*, before I enter on the labyrinth of *how*, it is. The *that* abides in us amidst all the varied metamorphoses of life; while the *how* is ever fleeing before us. As long as we abide with the former all is bright and smooth, all around clear as itself; but woe to the evil arts of the latter, which lead and mislead, and are at once allied to the good and the evil within us. The man who inquires into Nature should above all be on his guard against its demoniacal influence. It is not my object

To seek, by ways obscure,
The *I* that racks the unappeased mind.

The sound and practical thinker must regard as absurd those disquisitions on the difference—nay, the very existence—of mind and body, in which the older philosophers took so much delight. For the truth of this I would appeal to the healthy-toned feeling of every ingenuous person. Let him who doubts whether he has a Soul lay this book aside. Let him who refers to the body all the effects described by me as facts of experience, interpret my words to mean “a power exercised over all other parts of the

body by that portion of it to which the functions called mental belong." However distorted such a view of the case may be, the fundamental fact remains the same; the maxims derived from it lose nothing of their applicability; and in the present work we have only to deal with the fruitful Truth.

I know no better illustration of this fundamental fact than the instance of a man just awaking from sleep. Here, to take the same ground as our opponents, *that* is in a state of bondage which is destined to release the rest; yet it has power enough to free itself, and this power may be increased by practice. There is, indeed, a state of bondage where reaction, alas, is no longer possible. I allude to the night of the mind; but there is a milder degree—a twilight—in which the effects of impulse may be made available; and it is to this state that my propositions apply. There is, again, another intermediate degree—a stage of actual disease of the soul—where the will still acts—without it a cure were impossible;—but the impulse is given by the consciousness of others, not by our own.

In tracing these conditions to their origin,

some may say that we descend deeper than prudence warrants: yet I venture to hope that some light may be thrown on my subject, and a solution obtained, without the aid of casuistry, or a flight into the cloudy regions of metaphysics.

In a perfectly unconstrained state, man feels and lives like an unconscious unit; but consciousness destroys this spiritual innocence, and divides his life. The facts of consciousness, which are only recognised by the aid of inward reflection or self-analysis, point to a principle different from those derived through perception. This principle we denominate mind; but it must not be forgotten that the word "mind" merely represents an abstraction; for in this world mind only appears to us through its manifestations in man—that is to say, in corporeal beings. When thus associated with matter, we term it, in ordinary language, the Soul; and the substance united with the Soul we denominate the body. We cannot, assuredly, require proofs of the Soul's acting on the body; since we can only apprehend each in the unity of its manifestations, and it requires the highest order of cultivated intellect to form any clear idea of their difference. It is still more futile

to make any attempt to explain the manner in which mind and body are united together; because thought itself is an unit, and the thought which comprehends cannot comprehend itself. The immediate cannot mediate, even as the right hand, which lays hold of the left, cannot seize itself. In the act of thought the element of space accompanies that of time; and the acts of laughing or crying may be adduced as the proximate symbols of this connexion between mind and body. Medical men have observed that the nervous function forms the proximate link in the chain of this combined action. Any farther discussion on this point were useless. I have defined the idea, and shall not further pursue it.

We are also unable to enter into any examination of the causes which determine illness or recovery. Nor is it necessary.

It is enough to know that all disease arises from an internal, or from an external influence. Under the former head are included original germs of disease; for the development of which, however, some external influence is required. Under the latter, are comprehended all external agents which act injuriously on life; yet, here

again, we are compelled to admit some original susceptibility arising from weakness.

Diseases of internal origin are generally classed under the head of hereditary or constitutional; but there are many other conditions which have not hitherto been investigated with sufficient attention, and which might be regarded rather as errors of development than as true diseases. This hint may induce the reflecting physician to consider whether Malfatti's ideas relative to the connexion between disease with the evolution of life, may not be turned to some practical account.

Has the mind no controlling power over the conditions here alluded to? I do not, of course, refer to such rules as the physician is accustomed to lay down for the improvement of the capacity, or the avoidance of corresponding injurious influences. These rules emanate from mind; but not from the mind of the subject who suffers. Philosophers and philosophical poets take great pains to show us how undue tendencies may be regulated or suppressed; and may not the same thing be practicable within our province?

How do we obtain the best general idea of

a man's capacity as regards his health? By studying his *temperament*, a word which we now use in its vulgar sense, not in the one attached to it by the schools. Man is a whole made up of diversified parts; and the most acute observer of Nature can go no further than declare that "temperament is the tempering and fitting of the elements to an individual life."

"Each individual," says Herder, "bears with him in his bodily form and mental capacity that symmetry which he is ultimately to attain through self-development. It pervades every mode of human existence—from that which barely sustains life, to the finest form of the Greek demigod. By failings and errors, through destiny and practice, each mortal seeks to attain this symmetry of his powers; for therein lies the fullest enjoyment of his existence"—and I would add, the condition of his health. And shall not man, the only being in the universe capable of self-contemplation, aim at this, his own idea of himself?

Shall not he, whom Protagoras has called "the measure of the universe," also constitute his own estimate? Assuredly, the man who

turns from the turmoil of life to reflect on himself will not deny *this* influence of mind now under consideration; but will admit that we can thus obtain a power over ourselves, and consequently over disease, whenever it springs from our own nature. I have so far treated of *that*; the succeeding chapters will chiefly form a commentary on the *how*.

Many may think it wonderful, and by no means certain, that the mind should enjoy a controlling power beyond its immediate sphere; as if the world in which we live and move were nothing but the web of our existence. And yet, what else is it to us?

To the full-grown man it appears mature; to the child, childish; to the joyful, joyous; to the veiled eye, cloudy. It acts upon us according as we receive it. The happiness or misery of the individual depends on the deeply-marked impressions or conceptions of his own mind. Is it impossible to subject these impressions to control, or to obtain clearness of mental vision? We employ efforts enough to render it obscure. The wild fury of the storm, which drenched Lear's companion to the skin, touched not the unhappy man himself, because an internal

tempest of passion deadened the senses to all external impressions.

Yes, the most convincing proof of the strength of mind is—strange to say—to be found in its impotency. Every one knows that the unfortunate persons, whose minds are buried in the night of insanity, remain exempt from many diseases which attack others around them; their minds are concentrated on some delusion—their attention diverted from bodily suffering; and thus they are rendered insensible to external influences. And shall not a cultivated, well-directed volition have as much—nay greater—power than furious anger, or the horrible energy of the insane? A British writer,* describing the effects of a foggy, smoky climate on the health of his countrymen, makes, from personal observation, the following remarks:—

“In the mean time it remains undecided whether many of the diseases attributed to the atmosphere of our capital may not arise from the habits of the people. As animal heat is but slightly influenced by any alterations of atmospheric temperature, so likewise the human

* Medical Reports, 1830.

mind possesses an innate force of resistance, which, when roused to activity, is generally able to counterbalance the injurious influence of external agents. Physicians record instances of women who were able to waltz half the night with a favourite partner, though at the very time they were, unless excited, too feeble to cross a room. Thus the favourite stimulus awakes the living fibre. Hence, on the other hand, the idle and fashionable suffer more than others from the atmosphere of London. Persons whose attention and faculties are in a constant state of activity take no heed of the barometer. It is, indeed, well known that the dark days of November are the season of melancholy and suicide; but the gloom of the atmosphere cannot overcast the brightness of an unclouded spirit. The morbid excitement of the insane often withdraws them from the influence of atmospheric changes; and it is the thoughts with which man tortures himself—the associations which his imagination links to the autumnal fall of the leaf, that oppress and overpower him.

Although the anxieties of the hypochondriac rise and fall with the changes of the weather,

his frame of mind, together with the effects resulting therefrom, are ultimately determined by his mental calibre. The hypochondriac is always—if only for the time—a weak-minded man; and if he would only comprehend this, and set himself, in a determined manner, to work for his own improvement, he would prove a better physician than any other for the cure of his disease.”

What medical man does not feel that he could prove the truth of these observations by a number of examples even from limited experience? Do not cases of the kind now alluded to come constantly under treatment, especially in large towns? Does not the atmosphere which enshrouds them seem to consist of the passions, thoughts, or cares of the inhabitants? Is not suicide (whatever sympathy we may feel for a Werther) the melancholy heritage of morbidly sensitive natures—of feeble dispositions—which are incapable of contending with the hardness and asperity of actual life. The fate of Heinrich von Kleist here suggests itself; and will not every physician testify from his own experience that nothing but the conscientious fulfilment of his duties has, on many occasions, been able to

dispel the dark clouds which obscured his social and bodily existence? Nay, has he not felt that this very activity protected him from the dangers connected with the prosecution of his profession—that the wounds inflicted by duty bear with them a healing balm? “I was unavoidably exposed to the contagion of putrid fever,” says Goethe (whom I here cite, as in his case the strong impulse of professional duty was wanting, and the power of volition, therefore, the more strongly exemplified), “and I warded off the disease by a simple act of the will. The power of moral volition in such cases is incredible. It seems to pervade the whole body, and communicate a degree of energy which enables us to repel all injurious influences. Fear is a state of weakness during which we are easily conquered by an enemy.”

Every opinion of Goethe's on mental life is of peculiar value,—vital and practical, and unlike the beautiful self-delusions of so many other writers. What then is life but that force of the individual which maintains itself; which subjects all opposing influences to an internal law; which assimilates foreign elements; and which, thus engaged in constant movement, is

ever changing its condition, but never its being? Must not such a force of corporeal nature find its ablest support in that spiritual nature of which it forms the true characteristic—the chief and main agent? Self-activity is the condition of self-preservation; mental development is the condition of self-activity. The greater the power of thought in any individual, the greater is his power of spontaneous action; and the greater the latter the more completely will he live and be. A thousand influences lie in wait to ensnare mortal man. The whole world is an influence. But the strongest of all is individual character. Character makes the man; for as all beings in nature are merely manifestations of force, man can boast of nothing as his own except the energy which he displays. If unable to arouse this energy, let him assume it; let him place himself by a sudden effort in circumstances where he must *will*. It is an old and true saying, “that men seldom die upon a journey, or during their honeymoon.”

“Seldom,” says the reflecting Bulwer, “nay, scarcely ever, would disease cling incurably to us in the season of youth, if we did not ourselves believe in it and foster it. We see men

of the frailest constitutions who have no time to be ill amidst the constant activity of professional life. Let them be idle—let them reflect—and they die. Rust wears away the steel which remains bright while it is used; and if all were alike vain—if activity and indolence engendered the same evils, it must still be admitted that the evil is more easily avoided in the former, while at the same time it affords us a nobler solace.”

But I must not allow myself to borrow too much from this admirable author, with whom I so fully agree. My object has only been to show how powerfully mental activity assists in counteracting morbid influences; and I fear that I have said rather too much than too little on the subject.

III.

BEAUTY THE REFLECTION OF HEALTH.

Consecrate thyself and proclaim that Nature alone is venerable,
health alone lovely.—F. A. SCHLEGEL.

IN the preceding fragmentary remarks on mental dietetics, my object has been to claim for the spirit of man a power whereby he may resist external influences. I had intended going further, and passing from a power of simple resistance to one of action. Learned mystics have spoken of the profound influences of the divinely-conferred will, as of sins against our mother-earth. They have even ventured to assert, that as our bodies are the instruments designed for the cultivation and regeneration of the world, the control of the former includes the control of the latter. I was, however, on the point of renouncing my purpose through fear of being considered too bold in my conclusions, when chance threw in my way a work of great merit, in which, to my surprise, I met with several

reflections on the abstruse points we are now considering. Here I found my own opinions expressed much more boldly than I should have ventured to state them. But why not quote the author's words?

“Is it unreasonable to assume that the action of mind and body on each other is, like every other perfect action, reciprocal? May we not believe that the mind, which is an excessively penetrating agent, exerts a certain influence on the external world, and has the power of impregnating the earth, whenever its manifestations are intensely active? If we follow a logical mode of reasoning, and do not halt half way, we are forced to admit this opinion.

“At present, we can only venture to advance hypothetically that a good man makes the air and earth around him healthy; while a bad man and a bad deed infest the scene of their action, causing the virtuous to shudder, and the weak to incline towards evil, when they approach the spot. Such ideas may seem quaint and superstitious at the present day; but after the lapse of another century, they may, perhaps, be regarded as truisms. Every one knows the popular belief respecting the spot on which a

murder has been committed. Now, popular belief furnishes a rich and important source of knowledge respecting natural phenomena, because it results from the united experience of many, not from the reflections of a few. It is to be regretted that we do not know whether Dr. Haine of Berlin, whose diagnostic powers rendered him so celebrated, and who could distinguish the various eruptions of the skin by their odour alone, may not have been able to discover moral peculiarities by the same faculty."

Leaving my readers to appreciate this remarkable fragment as they please, I return to the subject before me. Probability becomes certainty, when we have brought the incredible within the range of the probable. Some of my readers may, perchance, be females, and for them I extract the following passage:—

"Persons like ourselves," says an intellectual authoress, "can only become healthy, by feeling the greatest disgust at illness, and placing implicit reliance on the axiom, 'that health is most lovely and loveable.'"

Let us then adopt this sentiment with fervour, while we consider that the form of man is the expression of his well-being.

In one of the most beautiful parts of his physiognomical fragments, Lavater has attempted to show that a visible harmony between moral and corporeal beauty, and between moral and corporeal ugliness, is as certain as that Divine Wisdom has appointed to every being a determinate form. It is almost unnecessary to mention that the beauty here meant is not a mere evanescent charm, but an all-penetrating spirit, unstained by the irrevocable impress of follies or passions. It is the province of the physiognomist to prove, what indeed few can deny, that our organism is developed according to a pre-ordained form; and that the sequence with which Nature proceeds is identical with that which establishes the law of thought. Hence, by going a little further, we are prepared to admit, that if the mind possess a corporeally-formative power, such power may manifest itself in beauty as well as in health. The movements of our voluntary muscles are regulated by those habits of feeling and willing which constitute character; and hence the features of the face, which are the external indications of human beauty or its opposite, are regulated by the same principle. Every oft-repeated

motion of the countenance, the smile or the tear, the writhing of pain, the sneer of mockery, the scowl of anger, each leaves behind it a track in which it works again and again until a permanent mark is established in the muscles and cellular tissue of the face. These external manifestations cannot continue long without leaving their traces in the subjacent and more solid structures. How far this action may be capable of modifying the form of the skull itself, is a question of some importance in a cranio-logical point of view; the more so, indeed, that our attention has been hitherto almost exclusively directed to the operation of internal causes.

The faces of passionate men are more deeply wrinkled when they arrive at old age than the countenances of tranquil persons; and the reason is manifest. In the former the skin of the face has been frequently contracted by violent gestures, which have left behind them deep traces of their existence. But other organs and systems of the body furnish evidence of the same influences. When an individual has enjoyed a long life, free from care, breathing tranquilly from a well developed chest, the

cavity of the latter becomes enlarged, and the important organs contained in it feel the beneficial effects. On the contrary, let the circulation of the blood be impeded or rendered languid by mental depression, and the effects are invariably manifested in disturbance of the secretions, imperfect nutrition, &c.

Such impressions influence the future condition of the individual the more permanently and quickly in proportion to the frequency, energy, and the early period of life at which they may be brought into play. The human organism is a vital circle, each point of which acts reciprocally on every other point. The influence expressed by the pallid and deeply wrinkled face, likewise manifests itself in the low voice, the tottering gait, the timid handwriting, the vacillating disposition, the susceptibility to atmospheric changes, and the gradual but certain advance of insidious disease. The seed which the mind has sown may act for the destruction of the body as well as for its preservation and cure. Beauty itself is, to a certain degree, nothing but a symptom of health. Harmony of function will produce harmonious accordance in the products of functional acts;

and if virtue embellish, while vice disfigures, who shall deny that virtue may preserve health, and vice induce disease?

Nature exercises a secret jurisdiction over us. Though slow and long-suffering, her decrees are inevitable. She takes cognizance of every error which escapes the eye of man, and is unamenable to his senses. The influence of her power—eternal, like all that flows from the spring of primitive force—descends from generation to generation, and points to the sins of the forefather as the cause of the suffering over which the descendant broods in secret.

The old and sad proverb, "He who did the deed must pay the damage," is true in the physical, as well as in the moral world. The natural philosopher who loves his fellow man should bestir himself to refute the doctrines of the mystic school relative to abortions and the regeneration of our race. Much progress has been already made, and the opinion is daily gaining ground, that not only the feebleness but the actual diseases of the present generation depend more on our moral than on our physical condition; and that they cannot be prevented by the bracing system or the hardening experi-

ments of a Rousseau or a Salzmann—by exposure or cold baths. To guard against them, or, if God will, to extirpate them, requires a higher culture, and that too of a totally different kind; and here the first step must begin with ourselves.

Medical men have been accused, and I fear with some justice, of considering mankind exclusively in a material point of view, as a coil of bones, muscles, and tissues, set in motion by the oxygen of the air acting on the blood. An opportunity is here offered to us for the refutation of this notion; the physician indeed sees and proclaims the advent of salvation from the same source as that to which the preacher and the moralist point. "Who is unable to perceive," writes in his youth the beloved of our nation, "that the conformation of mind which derives pleasure from every event, and dissolves every suffering in the fulness of the universe, must also be most advantageous to the workings of the machine? This conformation is virtue."

Wherever beneficent nature has assisted the efforts of moral cultivation, facilitating the higher development of the individual by a

happy organization (and has not the existence of moral as well as artistic genius been long admitted, for example, in Socrates, Marcus Aurelius, Howard, Penn?), *there* the manifestations of harmonious existence will be more evident and more lovely than in cases where the painful struggles of the Soul can barely wring a few blossoms from the rude soil of bodily organism. But all the more gloriously will those scattered rays of a higher light break forth as lightning from the depth of night, illuminating the outward form, as formerly the face of Socrates, and verifying the eternal truth of Apollonius—"there is a bloom, even in wrinkles." What, then, is beauty, but the spirit glorifying its earthly tabernacle; and what is health but the beauty of its various functions? Where the mind directs a well-tuned instrument we perceive not its glorious perfection from the facility with which it draws forth the harmony of virtue, and the effect appears to us natural; but when we know that it wrings harmonious accord from dissonance, then we deem its action miraculous. And as hidden beauty often bursts forth from the face of a good man in one great and solemn moment,

so also may the beauteous treasure of health be won by a single bold resolution. "Think not," exclaims the inspired physiognomist, "to render man beautiful without making him better;" and think not, I would add from the deepest conviction, to maintain him in health, without first making him better!

IMAGINATION.

Imagination is the Mercury of the human organism—the medium between all parts—the agent that renders man as good and as evil—Hume.

Modern psychologists are accustomed to reproach those of the older school with destroying the living unity of the human mind by their subdivisions of mental faculties into several higher and lower degrees; as, for example, reason, understanding, imagination, memory, &c. The reproach is well founded, if we consider these faculties as particular entities acting in accordance to laws within themselves; for the human mind is a single, entire, indivisible power, and the only distinction which it admits is in its modes of manifestation. These, indeed, may be distinguished in a clear and useful manner; and as such a distinctive classification has always proved less injurious than

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a confused association, we should thank the old school for having taught us to analyze man instead of regarding him as a wonder. While, then, we contemplate and admire the mental powers of mankind, we shall confine ourselves to a consideration of the different modes in which they manifest themselves to us.

However innumerable the radii which may be drawn from the centre of our innermost being to the circumference of infinity, there are yet three main directions from which all the others will be found to diverge; and these are the capacities of reflection, volition, and sensation—the latter of which is a combination of feeling and imagination. These three faculties constitute the inner man—his whole being, and tendencies—that which ordinary language in its proneness to philosophise denominates “the thought, poetry, and action of life.” Thought is the food, feeling the vital air, volition the exercise of mental life. I shall now proceed to the successive consideration of this triple mode in which the mind exercises its influence over our bodily sufferings.

If we admit the existence of several grades among the mental faculties, we must give to im-

agination the lowest place, to volition a middle one, and to reason the very highest. This, at all events, is the order in which these faculties are developed. Imagination predominates in childhood, desire in youth, reason in manhood ; and this order of succession must of necessity occur, if it be true that Nature always proceeds from small things to great. Let us therefore take Nature for our guide, and commence, as she does, with imagination. Is not imagination the faculty which unites the material to the spiritual world ?—a wondrous, changeful, mysterious principle, we scarcely know whether appertaining most to the soul, or to the body ; whether it rules us, or we rule it. This, however, is certain, that it is peculiarly suited to act as the mediating agent between mind and body. When we carefully examine the processes at work in our own minds, we discover that neither thought nor desire become directly corporeal in us ; but that both are invariably made manifest through the agency of imagination—a remark of great importance to the psychologist and the physician. Imagination is the mediatrix, the nurse, the mover of all the several parts of our spiritual organism. Without her, all our ideas stagnate,

all our conceptions wither, all our perceptions become rough and sensual. Hence the animating charm of dreams—those lovely children of fancy; hence the efficient power of genius, of poetry, and of all things noble. “Moreover,” to use the words of a comprehensive thinker, “imagination is the most unexplained and perhaps the most inexplicable of all mental faculties; for as it appears to be connected with the whole structure of the body, but especially with the nervous system, as is proved by so many diseases, it seems to constitute not only the bond and basis of all the finer faculties of the soul, but the connecting link between mind and body—the germinating bud, as it were, of the whole sensual organism for the further use of the reflective powers.”

Kant, the philosopher, *κατ’ ἐξοχήν*, who was far less adapted than his great opponent already referred to, to sing a hymn in praise of this

“Goddess ever changing, ever new,”

remarks that her motive power is much greater than that of any mechanical one. “The man,” he was wont to say, “who is thoroughly penetrated with a sense of social enjoyment, will eat

with much better appetite than he who has spent a couple of hours on horseback;" and "entertaining reading is a more healthy occupation than bodily exercise." In this sense, he regarded dreaming as an exercise during sleep, intended by Nature to maintain the organic machine in a state of vital activity. In the most reflective of all his works he goes further, and affirms that the enjoyment which we derive from refined society depends on increased peristaltic motion of the intestines; and that the increase of health thus acquired is the true aim of tender sensations and intellectual thoughts. We may allow some latitude to the philosopher from whom we receive such excellent advice. Another thinker has aptly named the imagination "the climate of the disposition." All diseases of the mind have their origin—and what is called their seat—in the imagination. If their seat were really in the mind, they would be errors or vices, but not diseases; and if in the body they would not be diseases of the mind. It is only in the point of contact between both—in that mysterious twilight in which the shadow of the soul's light is produced by the body, that this bugbear of humanity reveals itself with an aping

mockery, from which we turn aside with horror, and whose everlasting banishment is the true aim of mental dietetics. Imagination will ever constitute a faculty which deals with the unreal, and with which the germ of happiness or misery must ever be associated. Whenever imagination predominates to an abnormal degree, we forget ourselves in waking dreams and have made the first step towards insanity. Does not

“The poet’s eye in a fine frenzy rolling,”

call up, as if by an unhallowed charm, demons which it cannot banish unless its sight be steadfastly fixed on the eternal star of beauty? But even in the ordinary conditions of our existence, does not the imagination exercise upon us an incessant, though slowly-acting, influence? Must we not seek in the imagination of the parents the sole, or at least a very influential, germ of the vital form of the future individual? And if man may be so far called the child of imagination, has not this faculty a deep-seated origin within us? It might even be said that it existed in us before we were, and still exists when we have almost ceased to be; for its magic sway

is most powerfully exercised in all those conditions in which free consciousness is controlled by the force of an obscure volition—in infancy—in sleep—in insanity—in that imaginative period which is a blending of the three. What the surrounding world, with all its mighty influences, is to the outer man, imagination—the inner world of images enclosing the nucleus of life—is to the inner man. How, then, can its rule and interference fail to determine health or disease? “I have often indulged, for hours together, in fancies of all kinds,” says Lichtenberg; “and had it not been for this cure by imagination, which I generally pursued during the ordinary season for drinking the waters, I should never have reached my present age.”

When I remarked in a former passage that imagination and perception combine together, I did not desire to evade a more accurate distinction; but to express that feeling and fancy are only the passive or active conditions of one and the same faculty. When under the sway of the imagination we also feel; we therefore feel what we imagine—the imagination occupying itself passively with those impressions which the

external world presses on it under the form of perceptions. Those who are accustomed to reflect on their own condition will soon perceive that this is not a mere play upon words. We suffer when we turn the perceptive surface of our being towards the external world, and we free ourselves from suffering when we oppose to it an active imagination. Here, as in all things, suffering and joy flow from a common source. We are all familiar with the fact that the imagination exercises a curative influence over several morbid conditions; and if this be the case, why not admit that which can cure may likewise prevent; so that the influence which renders a disease fatal, may also be the means of inducing it?

How profound are the sufferings of those unhappy persons who allow their imaginations to become fixed upon some disease which threatens them, or from which they even imagine they already suffer! Sooner or later it is sure to attack them.

The physiologist easily explains this fact by informing us that the constant transmission of a nervous current into any organ must at last be followed by change in the condition of its nu-

trition, and consequently by disease. My readers are probably acquainted with the history of Boerhave's pupil. This young man, after having heard a course of lectures on the practice of medicine, gradually manifested all the morbid conditions which his eloquent teacher depicted in such vivid colours; and after going through fevers and inflammations in the winter, and nervous disorders in the summer, was finally compelled to abandon a profession, the study of which had brought him to the brink of the grave. In the month of September, 1824, a waiter read in one of the newspapers an account of the death of a man named James Drew, from the bite of a mad dog. He was instantly seized with hydrophobia, and conveyed to Guy's Hospital, where he died (*Britannia*, 1825).

Many unfortunate debauchees, tortured by remorse for their dissolute and wasted youth, and living in terror of its possible consequences, are so oppressed by the constant image of the evils which seem to threaten them, that they sink at length into the condition denominated by Weikard "tabes imaginaria," and which consists in a distressing compound of apprehension and actual suffering. Every practising

physician, especially in this age of sickly over-refinement, must have observed similar phenomena in himself or his patients. Medical students, while attending lectures on diseases of the eye, are often troubled with "*muscæ volitantes*," and find their vision really impaired while their mind is dwelling on the horrors of amaurosis. Or let us take the late fearful epidemic—cholera—as an example. The conversation turns on this topic; soon afterwards some of those who have taken part in it complain of uneasy sensations in the abdomen. They retire; and all the symptoms of the dreadful malady are actually developed. These are familiar examples which present themselves to us all: were I to borrow from books, their number might be increased without limit. And can we now doubt that the power capable of plunging man into such deep distress can also render him happy? If I am ill because I believe myself to be ill, why should I not have the power of keeping myself in health by the firm conviction that I am healthy?

Let me now turn to the pleasing considerations of those cases which afford an affirmative reply to these questions.

I shall not dwell on the miraculous effects which have been wrought in disease by faith and by hope, by dreams, by sympathies, or the charms of music; but I must allude to such facts as afford evidence that the power which acts so beneficially upon shattered organs will be still more active upon healthy ones. All the curative influences just enumerated are derived from the imagination; and time will probably teach our posterity that many others, whose source we now seek elsewhere, must be referred to the same faculty. These means lose nothing by being traced to such an origin; for if imagination make me well, is my health purely imaginary? A patient importunes his medical attendant to give him certain pills: the physician declines, because he thinks them not adapted to the case: the patient insists, and the doctor, appearing to yield, simply gives him bread-pills. What must be the worthy man's surprise on learning, the next day, not only that the pills have produced the desired effect, but also excited vomiting? Was this effect the less real, because it arose from imagination?

A person labouring under paralysis of the tongue was attended by an English surgeon.

The latter had invented a particular instrument from the use of which he anticipated great benefits; but before employing it he desired to ascertain the heat of the mouth, and so placed a pocket thermometer under the tongue. In a few minutes the delighted patient, who mistook the thermometer for the instrument, assured him that he could move his tongue (*Sobernheim, Gesundheitslehre, 1835*). Could this patient move his tongue the less, because imagination had cured him?

This is not the place to inquire how far the phenomena of animal magnetism may depend on the same cause. From time immemorial the effects of a fixed imagination on the body have been known and observed. "What will you say," writes the Asiatic traveller, Fontainier, from Teheran, in Persia, to Jaubert in Paris, 1814, "when I inform you that the theory (practice?) of what we call animal magnetism was known to the people of the East long before it reached Europe; that many persons in Asia follow it as a profession, and are therefore persecuted by the Mollahs?" The inhabitants of the East are much more familiar than we are with the world of fancy,

and hence its mysteries are better known to them.

To this class of phenomena appears to belong the effects which strong and highly-gifted natures daily exert upon uncertain or gentle minds. They are, in fact, operations of the imagination. The more superior understanding seldom influences our own until imagination has prepared the way for its reception. Great men do not exert an influence from their being at once understood; but by the halo which encircles them and attracts the imagination of others into their atmosphere. A mental, as well as an external atmosphere surrounds the world and all its parts—surrounds the present age and the passing hour. Here all the vital effects of the individual are diffused over a whole; and from it they react on the individual who is unconscious of the influence. Thoughts, sensations, and modes of representation, hover unseen in the atmosphere; we breathe them, we assimilate them, and communicate them, without being conscious of such processes. We might name it “the outer soul of the world.” The spirit of the time is its reflection in the pages of history; and the strange phenomena of fashion

are its "fata morgana." It encompasses the lesser circles of society, so as to form a delicate and contagious principle; and thoughts becoming dissolved in it, it influences even those ideas we think most peculiarly our own. Whether it be, or be not, the natural and necessary result of the organic action of one whole, still every accurate observer is speedily conscious of the special manner in which this atmosphere is influenced by the vital energy of some one individual, whose mode of existence is embodied in its own, and surrounded by it. The hero's courage diffuses itself, like a vivifying ether, through the hesitating and half-paralyzed ranks of his followers; the fluttering of fear acts like an irresistible infection; the jovial, heart-felt laugh, and the influence of indestructible good humour, carry away a whole company with a gentle, but irresistible force, and draws a smile, in spite of himself, from the lips of the grumbler. Again, do we not all know that yawning spreads like wild-fire through a whole assembly? Is not its action like that of the ungenial presence of a traitor among friends? I have often been asked—and the question is still proposed—how it comes to pass that a number of

upright and trustworthy persons should have asserted that they actually saw and heard spirits invoked by an exorcist? It may be said in a good and in a bad sense, that although miracles have ceased there still exists a mighty power—the power of Faith—which is able to remove mountains.

Esteem your brother to be good, and he is so. Confide in the half-virtuous man, and he becomes wholly virtuous. Encourage your pupil by the assumption that he possesses certain faculties, and they will be developed in him; look on him as incapable of cultivation, and he continues so. Pronounce yourself in health, and you may become so. All nature is but an echo of the mind; and from her we learn the highest of all laws—that the real springs from the ideal; that the ideal by degrees remodels the world.

Volumes might be written on this subject; but I must content myself with remarking that, where the imagination is congenitally too feeble to adopt my system of mental dietetics, we should endeavour to associate it with one more powerful, from which it may imbibe the breath and milk of mental health. “The man,” says Hippel, “is in a state of mental’

hectic whose powers of imagination are weak ; for the imagination is the lungs of the mind." If it be allowable to spin out such analogies, I would say that imagination is the vegetative sphere of the inward man ; while the perceptive faculties are its irritable sphere, and the capacity of reflection constitutes its nobler domain, the mental nervous system. Fancy is feminine in its nature. The life of woman lasts, on the whole, longer than that of man ; and hence results that superior physical power which is attached to tenderness and purity. How often do gentle, clinging, ivy-like natures, who seem woven out of mere moonlight and ether, and whose scanty nourishment consists of fairy dreams, continue to live to the surprise of themselves and of their friends. Does not even Kant, the most temperate of the evangelists of reason, regard hope, next to sleep, that bringer of dreams, as the guardian and genius of human life ? and what is hope but the child of fancy—the sister of gentle dreams ? In truth, Hufeland is right when he says that a well-directed imagination is among the most important means of prolonging life. Kalobiotics are but a part of macrobiotics ; and the beauty of our existence lies

in the hands of imagination. When we hear a celebrated woman boast, that "in advancing life she still preserves all the elastic impulses of childhood and youth," can we fail to see that she owes this blessing to that spirit of fancy, soaring on the wings of eternal youth, with which she excites the wondering admiration of her readers? The melancholy fate of Novalis, Heinrich von Kleist, and others of the same disposition, might have been long retarded, had not the same powers of imagination which were capable of warding it off, rather tended by their injurious influences to paralyze all light and joyous impulses. And this brings me to the point which I wish to establish. To avail ourselves beneficially of imagination, we must never forget that since it is only the ideal part of the perceptive faculty, and feminine in nature, its passive character must always be retained. It is a gentle, vestal fire, which lights and animates all around, while guarded with virgin strictness; but it spreads ruin and devastation abroad when loosened from its bonds.

We now come to another faculty which knows alike how to fan this flame, or damp it with a friendly smile. Wit! thou glorious element of

human cultivation! with thy noble companions, humour and joviality, thou exercisest the wholesome power of ridicule; and so dost thou save us from obscurity, pedantry, empty grandeur, and desponding timidity. Before thy light but mighty sceptre flee harrowing care, inflated greatness, and torturing delusion. The mild balsam which thou pourest on wounded spirits gives inestimable comfort when every other consolation fails.

Who would not attempt to prepare this balsam, or at least learn how to apply it?

Among the various efforts which constitute the mental life of man upon our planet, it is Art which more especially belongs to the sphere in which we move. As in dreams, a species of genial vegetation arrests the wearying strife between mind and body, and by associating them more closely together, restores and regenerates our existence; so does Art furnish us with those waking dreams which sustain a life that would otherwise succumb beneath the dissensions of reality. Music, the plastic arts and those of eloquence, address themselves partly to the mind, partly to the body. An acute observer, who always endeavoured to discover

the root whence each blossom sprung, maintained that all the effects of music depend upon health ; for when we feel the powers and functions of our body rightly attuned, then are we *well*. Music and song, indeed, animate all our organs in an harmonious manner ; the fluttering movement communicates itself to the whole nervous system, and our entire being joins in harmonious accord ; as if man, obeying a natural impulse, were proclaiming his existence in tones of exultation. And what are our feelings but a constant music of life ? an internal vibration which the art of music embodies in air, and manifests externally ? and does not every other art, like music, depend on this feeling of harmonious proportion ?

If these various branches of art were controlled and guided by the masculine element of the mind above alluded to, and thus made subservient to peace and reconciliation, they would form a palladium of health and cheerfulness. Then, and then only, would their mild ethereal presence refresh us during life, and even in death encompass us with harmonious sounds ; so as to lead us by glorious and unheard

gradations to the greater and eternal harmony of the spheres.

But I must not travel beyond the limits of my subject to inquire how far the present condition of the fine arts is calculated to attain this high and noble object;—to consider whether the works of modern painters inspire a healthy toned admiration, like that which we experience when contemplating the Vatican Apollo; or to ascertain whether the writings of our poets are adapted to cultivate and animate us—to cheer us and keep us in health. These questions, however, are more closely connected with a system of mental dietetics than might be supposed.

V.

WILL--CHARACTER--INDECISION--ILL-HUMOUR --DISTRACTION.

The tendency to be affected by typhoid and epidemic diseases seems to be diminished by high moral character.

COLLECTION OF MEDICAL OBSERVATIONS.

By the term *will* I do not mean to express a more or less highly-developed faculty of desiring; but that innate intellectual energy which, unfolding itself from all the other forces of the mind, like a flower from its petals, radiates through the whole sphere of our activity—a faculty which we are better able to feel than to define, and which we might, perhaps, most appropriately designate as the purely practical faculty of man. Even those most deficient in mental vigour must be conscious that they possess the faculty of *willing*; and when it is energetically developed, it manifests itself as *character*. This force constitutes man's individuality, gives the first impulse to reason and

imagination, and reveals the wonders of our spiritual life. It is on this faculty that the moralist, the legislator, the schoolmaster, the physician must act—above all others, he who would regimen his own mind in order that he might acquire dominion over it. Here we discover the illuminated soul of Stahl; since that force of which this deep thinker has proclaimed such marvellous effects, even when shrouded in the darkness of instinct, manifests itself in the bright light of consciousness as *will*. And can we suppose that it will, in this improved state, be less powerful? We may seek in vain to enlighten the understandings of the insane, or convince them of the absurdity of their fixed ideas; but we may succeed in effecting a cure if we can excite into activity the faculty to will and to do. Mental and physical effects would be increased beyond measure, if men understood how to prepare a balsam like this in their own minds; or would only learn how to prepare it—for the *will* may be cultivated, and, in a certain sense, acquired. Never was there greater need of inculcating this precept than at the present day, when the understanding and imagination are luxuriantly cultivated to the melancholy

depreciation of other mental faculties. If, as Hardenberg remarks, character be only a highly cultivated will, there can be no question as to what is required for the cultivation of the character. Our understanding, deciding upon the first reasons presented to it, may be unsettled by those which succeed them; and our feelings, moved by the first impulse, are equally susceptible of change from subsequent counteracting impressions. But it does not follow that we could have *will* without reason or feeling, or in opposition to them. What we desire is to render it flexible without weakness, and strong without obstinacy. The inner man, after all, is but *one*—one force—and the object of cultivation should be to give strength and proper direction to this force. “Deliberation,” we might exclaim with Carlos, “is a disease of the mind which can only lead to unhealthy action. Thou art free from all suffering if thou wilt be so; the most miserable of all states is an inability to will anything. Feel thyself, and thou wilt be all that thou wast—all that thou canst be.” Mind and body are hampered by a thousand constraints from which we are unable to free ourselves; but how many others are there which

a single firm resolve would annihilate?—chains which we forge ourselves, and excuse under the names of irresolution, absence of mind, ill-humour, &c.

It especially behoves a system of mental dietetics to call these demons of health by their right names.

Irresolution is a wretched convulsion of the mind, which only too readily terminates in intellectual paralysis. It is not death which is cruel to man; but man to himself, when, with half-closed eye, he gazes on its uncertain image, and sometimes advances towards it, sometimes turns his lingering looks away. M. Herg gives us a most striking example of what may be effected by mental uncertainty and by decision. A man was reduced to the last stage of hectic fever, kept up and augmented by the conflict between the hope which his physician felt bound to instil, and his own consciousness of his desperate condition. In this juncture M. Herg resolved to try a last and bold experiment, and announced to the unhappy man that his case was utterly hopeless. The shock gave rise to violent excitement, followed by a dull and mournful calm. In the evening the patient's

pulse was regular; and he passed the night more tranquilly than he had been accustomed to do. The fever now gradually abated, and the patient in three weeks was restored to health. When Herg ventured on so bold an experiment, he must have been well acquainted with the subject on whom he operated; but the principle on which he made the attempt is one deeply implanted in the nature of man. A frequent cause of irresolution is connected with the reflection, "It is too late—no effort can now avail." Yet such a consideration should lead us to resolution. If it be really too late the resolve is easy, because necessary. If it be not too late, resolve without delay, and success will crown your effort. There is profound wisdom in the old proverb, that "the knight must not look around him, if he would win the treasure."

Distraction, which may be termed an irresolute observation, bears the same relation to the mind that muscular tremor does to the body—an oscillation which shows that the mental power is insufficient to act with perseverance in one direction, but constantly requires rest, remission, and change. Experience proves that

bodily infirmity may be relieved, or even gradually and permanently removed, by a powerful impulse; and we may reasonably expect the same beneficial results from strong volition, the deepest and most special of all mental impulses. I have often observed, in my own person, that the appearances called *muscæ volitantes*, and the fluttering movement of letters in a book, cease as soon as I fix my eyes steadily on the vibrating objects themselves. And in the same way a firm resolution is capable of directing and strengthening our internal faculties. I have, therefore, always regarded the much talked-of good effects of distraction in mental or bodily disease as very doubtful. On the contrary, I am inclined to believe that concentration of thought and observation (the fixation of the will upon our own actions) is the curative resource to which we should look in such cases. For life acts from within outward; whereas death, like disease, acts from without inward. If any one should object to this, that he is devoid of the force necessary to direct himself, I would recommend him to place himself in some position where he *must* act. This, at least, he can do. The first step is everything. A man may be without an occupation, and have no desire

to enter on one. Let him devote himself to the state, or to some individual, in such a manner that he shall be compelled to work. By laying hold of the first *best* that offers, and cutting short all choice, we put an end to all vacillation; the melancholy cloud of torturing thoughts is at once dissipated by active, if unwilling, social employment; useless cares are thus thrown aside, and an apparent cheerfulness assumed, which eventually ends in becoming a real one. "For the cure of mental diseases," writes a deep thinker, "the understanding can do nothing, reason but little, time much, resignation and activity everything." This mode of preventive, or rather curative treatment is based on the law that a strong stimulus must always displace a weaker one. When the mind, and through it the body, are acted upon by the *will*, the most diffusible and potent of all stimulants, other agents must be blunted and rendered comparatively innoxious. In the world of thought, as in that of matter, we cannot always avoid contact with injurious or irritating agents; but a fixed determination in one direction necessarily implies abstraction from all others, especially where this tendency

is active and not contemplative. But even the latter may produce marvellous effects when the mind is so wholly absorbed in its own immensity that time and space seem no more. Semler was unaware of the existence of the fire which was consuming his house; and Archimedes exclaimed to the soldier, with sword uplifted over his head, "Disturb me not while I am drawing this circle."

Ill-humour is a demon which has contrived under various denominations to find a place in society. We all possess our moods and humours; but woe to the man who is possessed by them. An intellectual female writer advises the poet to use the various moods of his mind as the sculptor uses the marble; and does not the same precept apply to man generally? Are not true dietetics an art of life? If they be not, we should at any rate endeavour to raise them to such a standard; for then, perhaps, the art of living well might be converted into the art of living long, as it was by the cheerful and healthy Greeks. Lavater has left us a moral lecture against ill-humour, and I feel tempted to subjoin a medical one on the same subject. No one can avoid being sometimes sad; but

every one can eschew ill-humour. The former has a certain poetic charm about it; the latter is utterly devoid of attraction. It is the very prose of life—the sister of ennui and laziness. We might justly denominate it a sin against the Holy Spirit in man. If we seek to trace the source of this poison from the experience of everyday life, we shall find that it depends on habit, “that nurse of man,” and of his vices. Accustomed from childhood to spend every superfluous hour in cheerful occupation, until the sweet yet urgent demands of sleep compelled us to sound and healthy dreams, we should never have been ill-humoured. Were we never to waste the sweet morning hours in sleep, we should know nothing of that morose indolence which generally arises from the feeling of having slept too long. Did we habitually and constantly arrange everything around us with regard to cheerfulness and order, the same regularity would be harmoniously reflected in our souls. In a cheerful orderly apartment a man’s feelings become cheerful; they partake of that which surrounds him. But the best way to avoid ill-humour is to employ our leisure moments in a proper man-

ner. We are not always well disposed for everything; but we are always disposed for something. Let each one, therefore, do that to which his inclination prompts him, resting satisfied with the truth that variety is the law which rules the world.

“If in the evil hour thou rest,

The good that comes is doubly blest,”

says the poet. Solitude engenders ill-humour, and, according to Plato, selfishness. Inter-course with the world may also make a man morose, or even selfish; but a well-regulated interchange between solitude and society renders us cheerful and inwardly healthy. Religion—that true knowledge of the love which should guide and accompany us at every step—will preserve its followers from ill-humour more certainly than any other influence. The disposition which receives all blessings with gratitude, will support evil fortune more lightly. When a man has had the misfortune to be born ill-humoured, he should not, as most do, deceive himself; he should rather regard himself as labouring under disease, and employ every means in his power to get rid of the affliction.

Let us now consider what these means are—what is the force of volition over influences, which seem entwined with the very roots of our nervous system. We have examples in abundance. I have read of an individual, though I cannot remember where, who, by a strong volition, could produce an erysipelatous inflammation in any part of his body. The will also exercises a remarkable influence over the organs of vision. There are persons who are unable to control the usually involuntary action of the heart by volition. It is said that a certain tribe of American savages, when their mission is complete, lie down, close their eyes, and determining to die—actually do die in the flower of their years by the main force of will. The successful efforts made by Demosthenes to correct certain imperfections are well known. In Brown's posthumous writings, we find a description of the manner in which the American ventriloquist, Carvin, learned his art by a method alike remarkable in a physiological, psychological, and ethical point of view; and which affords a good practical illustration of all human efforts. There was first a presentiment awakened by accident—next a feeble attempt

followed by apparent success—then a conviction of incapacity—efforts to reattain the former successful moment—a second and genuine success—incessant and sanguine practice—proficiency—and at last an established habit.

These experimental efforts drew the following observations from the reflecting mind of the narrator.

“When we reflect on the numerous modifications of muscular movements, how imperfectly they are generally trained in the present day, and further that the domain of the will is unbounded, we shall cease to wonder at the results now mentioned. Some individuals acquire the power of concealing the tongue so completely that even an anatomist can scarcely discover the organ. This is effected by a combination of little known muscular movements; although we might all develop it if we so willed. When I had once discovered this singular faculty in myself, I carefully observed all the phenomena attending the act and subjected them to the control of the will, until the efforts, at first difficult, become mere play by habit and practice.” So certain is it that the wondrous organization of man conceals unrevealed powers which an

iron will may awaken and develop to astonishing perfection. The true stoic philosophy, which was beyond doubt the purest, loftiest, most practical, and widely diffused of all ethical systems prior to Christianity, affords us ample proofs of the power of strong volition. No one can imagine that the minds of the stoics were steeled by the cold syllogisms of their school. No; it was the strength of the *will* which formed the basis of this the most moral of all heathen systems, and produced those wondrous results which the present feeble-willed generation admires, as it would the mythical toils of the slothful Scheherazade. Reasoning must always be founded on experience; but reasoning has never yet engendered experience, unless we apply the latter term to a still-born and crippled form of experiment.

Cicero relates how a stoic philosopher, attempting to establish in the presence of Pompey that "pain is no evil," subdued a violent attack of gout in his own person and demonstrated his argument, as it were, on his own feet. Was this act one of simple demonstration? Was it not rather the living sentiment of its import which effected the miracle? The

stoic school first taught its followers, by great examples, to exercise their volition: the latter, having convinced themselves of the reality of this power, reflected on it, and handed down to us this simple but grand formula of doctrine—"What the spirit *wills*, the body *must*." Neither dogmas, nor contemplation, nor enthusiasm alone can animate and inspire man, as with a light from above; but his own inner nature must work outwards and upwards. The caterpillar is not transformed into a butterfly because it has tasted honey from the flower; but it lives on honeyed nectar because it has become a butterfly.

Let us see whether we are able, by firm and persevering resolution, to convert into flesh and blood the beautiful precepts which have been transmitted to us by the noble models of antiquity.

God grant that it may be so!

VI.

UNDERSTANDING—CULTURE.

I regard even physical pain as a state of entanglement into which we are unable to penetrate.

Our task is to obtain clearness of mind, and a pure, if possible, a strong will. For the rest it matters little whether we weep, pray, or laugh.—RAHEL VARNHAGEN.

THE preceding fragment has been designed to show the power of the will, and the necessity of adopting some definite course of action; but it may be asked, *what should we will?* what course are we to take? These vital questions must be answered by *knowledge*—the eternal fruit of the tree of life—matured by the rays of reason. Imagination becomes lost in dreams, and the will is annihilated until both faculties are consecrated by mind—"the dispeller of chaotic confusion, the arbiter of fate." The noblest theme of mental dietetics, is a consideration of the power exercised by cultivation over

the obscure forces of our sensual nature, and of the aid which mental culture affords in establishing the health of individuals and even of mankind in general.

There is, probably, no phenomenon which astonishes the reflecting inquirer into man's nature, more than the possibility of acting on the concrete, bodily organization by the power of abstract thought—by that agent which we may call “the feeling of thought.” It is the prerogative of man that his ideas should excite feelings, and that the mind should act downwards on the body through the former, or the body act upwards on the mind, through *the* feelings specially so called. Humanity is rooted in this capacity for intellectual as well as moral and religious feeling. When animals of an inferior order feel, they do not think; they do not possess any relation which would allow of feelings like ours. These exist in man alone, and constitute the fact of our consciousness. We must, however, remember that our duty is here to indicate their practical applications, not to discuss their nature. It is sufficient to know, that the man who has trained himself thereto feels the power exercised by thought over his

whole being, and attributes to mind the honour due to it.

Those psychological observers who have accustomed themselves to consider the interior and exterior as intimately combined—as the inspiration and expiration of one living being—will readily understand and apprehend the views which I have here advanced. Not so those who are wont to regard mind and body as antagonistic entities associated in an arbitrary manner; or who adopt the prevailing opinion, that every enjoyment of man's sensual nature is detrimental to his spiritual being, or that the mind can only be cultivated at the expense of the body. Such a view would condemn the unfortunate mortal to an alternative of destruction in one form or another, from that creative force which every desire excites within him. But it may be asked, do not the frequent examples of sickness in the learned and the citizen, and of health in the illiterate and the peasant, confirm the opinion now alluded to? I answer that everything depends on our forming a correct idea of cultivation. The learned man has, perhaps, devoted half his life to geometry, and neglected the study of his fellow man; or

he may have traced history through all its streams, and suffered the gold of the present to lie buried in the sand—attempting to reach the kernel before he has touched the shell. The corpulent man, on the other hand, may not be so thoroughly devoid of mind as his learned neighbour imagines, for he may have made a study of the art of enjoyment. The peasant may know quite enough to enable him to fulfil moral and social duties. This is no trifling progress: the inhabitant of a city may not know as much, and will have to pay the penalty of his ignorance. True cultivation is the harmonious development of all our powers: it alone can render us happy, good, and healthy. This it is which sheds a light on the sphere that our capacities have fitted us to fill; which teaches us to know our powers by testing their use, and enables us to subject the fancy of childhood, or the stormy will of youth, to the clear light of matured reason, without destroying either faculty.

This essential portion of mental dietetics must be left to each to elaborate; more especially during that period of maturity when the sun of life has reached its meridian.

Can we separate the disposition and development of the will from those of our perceptions? Volition and feeling—and consequently pleasure or pain—are but results of the manner in which we contemplate ourselves and the world; and the manner again depends on our development. Comfort and despair, Eden and the desert, lie *within* us. When the eye is clear the world looks bright; so that while our mode of thought forms the basis of mental disposition, it also constitutes the groundwork of our well-being. Hence much can be effected by a system of thought which originates within ourselves and has become identified with our whole being. It will sustain the weary, give rest to the sufferer, and protect the healthy. The prolongation of Spinoza's life may be partly attributed to the well-grounded convictions of his mind. The spirit becomes cheerful when it contemplates the world from an elevated and comprehensive point of view. When we fix our eye on the ultimate end, the evils of this life seem insignificant. Let us lay less stress on man's approbation—its loss will afflict us little, nor shall we fail to find other objects. "Let us fix the mind on the opposite of that which causes pain, and we

shall learn what is required for general harmony. When the egoist feels his troubles most acutely, on perceiving how few things answer his desires, his egoism forms its own punishment." Let us, then, extend our views and cultivate noble aspirations; let us learn to know that if life be a gift, it is a charge likewise—a plenary power of doing what is right—but only in the sacred name of duty.

▲ If the main cause of indisposition is to be sought in an over anxious attention to the affairs of our own cherished bodies—as indeed a careful examination of the present generation proves to be the case—what can remedy the evil more effectually than elevation of the mind from a lower to a higher object? It is deplorable to see how feeble minds are slowly undermining existence by the very precautions which they take to prolong it. The very physician whom they consult cannot fail to despise them, and they die of their desire for life. And why? Because they are deficient in culture of mind, which would have relieved them from such miseries by unchaining their better part, and giving it control over the material.

I shall say nothing of the many results of

stoical philosophy which excite our admiration, since I have attributed these rather to the will than to other causes; but I may ask, have any class of men fulfilled the sphere of existence allotted to them with more cheerfulness of mind than those deep thinkers who, from Pythagoras to Goethe, have applied their souls to the noblest ideas? It is only by cheerfulness that we can preserve health; and this view is itself the work of the result of insight. That acute thinker who has penetrated the most deeply into the wondrous abyss of the mind—that philosopher who has ever been regarded as the most obscure and gloomy of any, has bequeathed to us the remarkable axiom that “Cheerfulness can have no excess, but must always arise from good; while sadness always springs from evil; but the more the spirit understands, the happier we are.” It is the calm and noble privilege of true philosophy that she can indicate to man a point of view whence he may look down on the changing stream of events, without care, without strife, but not without sympathy; whence, in the rich unity and fullness of his mind, the past appears a legacy, the future a definite end full of hope, the present a

treasure confided to his use, whose value he alone can estimate, which he alone can turn to profit and enjoy with the even, happy spirit of youth. Such is the power of philosophy, but only of that philosophy which neither makes the head burn, nor the heart grow cold; which pervades the whole being from the innermost depths of thought; which must be loved, in order to be learnt; and which begins and ends in an endeavour to comprehend and test itself. How insane is it to estimate and envy unknown happiness. Happiness is an idea; and hence exists only in the mind. Whoever has learned by experience to compare dull, sensual enjoyment with the feeling of mental serenity, will perceive that this is not a mere play upon words. This envy only concerns the non-existence of unhappiness, which is also but a conception of the mind. Hence mental serenity forms the protection and safety of our being.

Self-knowledge is the most important result of mental cultivation. The supreme Author of our being has allotted to each individual a determined relation of forces which move in one limited sphere. Neither to exceed nor to fall

short of this measure insures the integrity, the health of the individual, as of one whose very identity depends upon this relation. Hence to estimate it aright is the climax of human wisdom. Further than this none can go; and more than this the superscription on the Delphic temple did not require. He who knows how to attain this proportion by that real development of his powers—which is less a possession than a mode of existence—will preserve life and health. His condition will be free and unrestrained, belonging only to himself; and whilst, with Egmont, he may learn how to command nature, he will know how to remove every foreign and morbid element from his blood. “The greatest treasure that God can give his creatures is and ever will be—genuine existence.” If these words of Herder be true, cultivation is the key to the most precious of treasures; for as Nature has insured the permanence of existence by implanting in us a force of resistance and self-renovation, so may we, on our side, increase the force of these attributes by self-acquired powers of mind. Levity—that joyous expression of a naturally elastic character—exerts a remarkably preservative

influence, permeating our whole being with life as with an ethereal vapour; and if such be the case, why may not the lightness of spirit, which emanates from the consciousness of a clear and distinct individuality, exercise a deeper influence than this involuntary and transient intoxication of the senses?

Self-knowledge, the crowning acquisition of mental cultivation, is only attained by regarding ourselves as parts of a *whole*, yet associated with all the component parts thereof. A vital knowledge of this fact forms the beginning of the true human development and of the contented state of mind and body with which it is connected.

When we take an unprejudiced view of the hypochondriac, we must confess that his misfortunes depend on a melancholy egoism. He lives, thinks, and suffers for his miserable self alone; he is dead to the sublime spectacle which the world of nature and of man present to the feeling heart; he is insensible to the joys, and what is far worse, to the sorrows of his fellow-men; he watches with exhausting perseverance every faint sensation in the remotest parts of his trembling frame; he is tortured, nay, more,

he dies, during his whole life. He envies others, and becomes to himself a source of terror which is only exhausted with existence itself. The life he constantly chases becomes at last indifferent to him, and finally, he sinks into the condition of a mere animal. He can no longer exclaim with the healthy man "nothing human is foreign to me;" for to him everything human is foreign; and with the involuntary desperation of an Orestes—whom the avenging deities are gradually robbing of his best possession, self-consciousness—he clings to the miserable lump of earth, which he calls himself, until he sinks at last into the clod to which he has debased himself. What are the world, nature, mankind, cultivation, to such a being? Hypochondriasis is egoism carried to excess, and egoism arises from want of cultivation. Give this unhappy man's mind a timely direction towards the sum of things, open his heart, and unveil his eyes to the fate of his fellow-men, in one word—develop him; and the demon, whom opiates could not calm, nor tonics control, will fly before the light of spiritual day. And if a cure be impossible, there is still some consolation in exclaiming with the unhappy poet—

“Alles leidet! Ich allein
Soll erhaben, über Schmerzen,
Unter Gräbern glucklick sein?”

All men suffer! And shall I
Refuge crave, or in the grave
Seek a lone felicity?

If the disclosure of the great total of nature can so benefit the sufferer, how much more will it not prevent the origin of his disease? Such views give rise to the noblest practical results to which man can attain, and which can alone determine health, so far as it depends on himself,—self-conquest and self-denial,—which combine in equal parts to produce temperance. Powerful volition is proof of a strong nature. But it is still greater to sacrifice the will in right season, and this resolution education alone can effect, by fixing the mind on the benefits of order and moderation, before which all arbitrary manifestations of the will stand condemned as acts of folly. The will, when powerfully excited, exercises its most striking influence in transient conditions; whereas reason acts on chronic mental diseases: just as joy instantaneously accelerates the vital process, but when often repeated exhausts it; while carefulness,

exerting what we might call a nutritious influence, elevates the standard of life in a gentle but steady manner. An intelligent author has remarked that the best way of avoiding the social or natural collisions to which we are exposed in this life, is to rise above them. Now, Contemplation, the daughter of reason, is the only means by which man can thus raise himself above circumstances. The mind of God animates the immeasurable creation, and He has bestowed on the man who knows how to develop himself, the privilege of participating in the fountain of life, which flows through the everlasting realms of space. Plunged in a sea of contemplation, and yielding passively to the stream which bears him onward along the ocean of eternity, the Brahmin passes in cheerful health through a term of years to which the restless European never attains. Although Nature was not bountiful to Kant, the depth and force of his noble thoughts gave him constant health, and thus seeming to confirm the theory of many learned men, who would establish an affinity between the Hindoos and Germans. We cannot pretend that Wieland, the very pattern of an harmonious life, was, although a poet, in-

debted to imagination or violent emotions for the charming phenomena of his beautiful existence. No: it was the equable development of his mental faculties, and the submission of his clear understanding to those laws which govern the universe, which, associated with a happy organization, brought him to that joyous and sound old age which stands like a beautiful fable in the history of German literature.

What then is thought but a human, beneficent, and pleasurable occupation, constituting a provident mean between diversion and concentration, and which gently connects man with his higher destiny, while it fulfils the requirements of his earthly being. How profitable is this insight into the grand chain of physical powers which are everywhere linked together, and point to one final happy unity! How cheering is it to be able to point with reverence to those mighty spirits which stand, like hoary deities, in the temple of history, as signs of the mind's power over the nothingness of earthly decay! Plato continued to learn and to teach in his eightieth year. Sophocles was far advanced in life when he composed his *Ædipus Colonus*. Cato, when equally aged, felt no

weariness of life. Isocrates shone as an orator in his ninety-fourth year; Fleury as a statesman in his ninetieth; Loudon, according to his biographer, manifested the same intelligence at Belgrade that he had shown thirty years earlier at Domstœdt; and Goethe's existence, prolonged far beyond the ordinary limits of longevity, was cheered by pleasant thoughts gathered from his having studied the secrets of Nature, as revealed to him in the primitive type of her works.

Let no one affirm that our age presents a melancholy counterproof of the effect of intellectual culture on the body; or that the debility of this generation appears to have increased with true civilization and mental polish. Is polish of mind its cultivation? and has not true cultivation, wherever it has been exercised in the present age, produced the most genial effects? In some cases, perhaps, premature and excessive exercise of the intellectual faculties may have affected the bodily health; but a cure may be derived from the same source whence the disease proceeded. Do not reading, conversation, and reflection, open up rich springs from which we are sure to imbibe renovated health and cheerfulness? I do not

here allude to the metamorphosis of a deficient organism; for faith and imagination are here more likely to work miracles than understanding. But if we watch intelligent, clear-minded individuals, we shall find that they complain of mental and physical indisposition less frequently than persons who consider sensual enjoyments to constitute the real happiness of this earthly sphere, and who, when blind fortune has raised them to power, will decide in a moment on the life or death of a brother man, according to their temper, their caprice, or the state of their bodily functions.

When we have refreshed imagination with the wonders of art, fortified character by morality, and satisfied our desires by cultivation, we shall be able to resist with ease those injurious influences which are constantly assaulting us from without. We perceive with inward satisfaction that all mental and bodily efforts tend to the same end—that of perfecting and rendering us happy; that life, art, and science are rays of the same sun, beneath whose genial heat our existence is brought to maturity.

On reconsidering what I have written I find that I have played three variations on a single

theme; in other words, have played the same melody on three different instruments, while I endeavoured—for the sake of observation—to separate man into various parts, although he is essentially an unity. This is a repetition, and yet not so: for as the relation of powers and tendencies varies in each individual, those who regard my observations as worthy of notice must develop them according to their requirements—must evoke or limit the imagination, the will, or the thought—in short must adopt the method which I shall propose in the following chapter for the establishment of a healthy condition.*

* The recent observations of Brigham show what progress has been lately made in the doctrine that intelligence influences the bodily health of man. This author endeavours to prove that learned men generally attain an advanced age, and that civilization has always the effect of reducing the standard of mortality. Hence he attaches great importance to temperance societies, and shows that in the elevation of our sources of enjoyment lies the special means by which mental cultivation contributes to the well-being of the body.

VII.

TEMPERAMENTS—PASSIONS.

Passions are either deficiencies or exaggerated virtues.

GOETHE.

THE present sketches will be regarded as too arbitrary and imperfect, if the questions of temperament and passion do not receive some brief consideration. Little remains to be said on the former, while too much, perhaps, has been written on the latter, both with and without passion, notwithstanding which they continue to govern us as powerfully as ever. I had hoped that enough had been said on these essential points to enable the reader to develop them at his pleasure; but while some readers are grateful for conciseness, others require explanation on everything. The former class must therefore excuse me if, to content the latter, I subjoin the following observations. They are mere scattered notices; and I leave each person

to supply his own dissertations on psychology and biological philosophy as he may deem most appropriate.

There are only *two* species of temperament. The four well-known varieties, and the millions which are less known, are merely modifications of two species, and combinations of their modifications. These are the active and the passive form; and every other variety may be conveniently arranged under them.*

As character comprises the entire sphere of the educated will, so temperament is nothing else than the sum of our natural inclinations and tendencies. Inclination is the material of the will, developing itself when *controlled*, into character, and when *controlling*, into passions. Temperament is, therefore, the root of our passions; and the latter, like the former, may be distinguished into two principal classes. Intelligent psychologists and physicians have always recognised this fact; the former dividing tem-

* Lâvater, Zimmermann, and Von Hildebrandt adopt a similar classification. The author of the treatise on "diet," included among the works of Hippocrates, takes the same view of temperaments: as likewise the Brunonian school, which maintained two antagonist, sthenic and asthenic, states.

peraments into active and passive, the latter classifying the passions as exciting and depressing. We would apply the same statement to the affections or emotions. The temperament commonly denominated sanguine or choleric is the same as our active species; and that known as the phlegmatic or melancholy is the same as our passive one. It is not true, as many people seem to think, that an inert temperament plays an easy part in the practical philosophy of life; for the force of *inertia* is one of the strongest in nature, and far more difficult to overcome than animation. Yet the essence of mental dietetics consists in overcoming this force; and the wisdom of life is partial to movement, not to repose. Here, again, its main point is to discover the limits assigned to each individual, and the sphere of active development in which he is capable of maintaining his mental and bodily health, and to soothe or excite his faculties accordingly. Indifference is death itself; and hence it is absurd to attempt to stifle passions at their source. For the source of passion is *inclination*; without inclination we feel no interest; and without interest, life becomes a burthen. The ancient fable informs us that the Muses were the

daughters of Memory, and Memory the daughter of Love. Inclination must exist before wisdom can direct it; but indifference will pervade the dreary wilderness which is void of inclination. Ennui and sloth are the sister and brother of indifference—a fearful family alliance. “He who wounds me,” exclaims an animated writer, “injures my body only: but he who wearies me assassinates my soul.” And he who wearies himself needs to be placed under a system of mental dietetics. Life is built upon love and hatred. It avails little to know that hatred is a form of concealed love, as death is an unknown form of life: it suffices to be aware that both are expressions of the same life, attraction and repulsion equally essential to its well-being. Dejection itself is an element of mental activity, and as necessary to our mental disposition as bile is to our physical. Passions are as much forces as any other powers of mind or body. No one can call valour into existence, but a trifling excitement and opposition will evoke and arm it. Forces are never to be neglected or suppressed: they must be studied, united, raised, and arranged. All lies in this. Does not the cautious Lessing speak of a passion for truth? Is not enthusiasm an affec-

tion—a flame which nourishes and sustains the mental and bodily life of man? Enthusiasm raises us over a thousand rocks on which cool calculation would be shattered: it gives a warmth which brings into play powerful and unsuspected forces of maintenance and salvation. He who looks into his own condition must often feel the beneficial influence of active mental impulses. Persons of talent rejoice in finding a suitable theatre for the display of their powers—some stimulus in the internal or external world. “The elder Cato,” says his biographer, “was never perfectly happy except when Jove thundered.”

But, it may be rejoined, does not a passionless life protect us from fretting ourselves away? May not insects be retained for years under their chrysalis envelope? Do not plants shut up in cellars live longer than those in the open air, because the circulation of sap is more actively maintained in the latter? What say you to marmots or to toads inclosed in stones? My answer is simple. Men are not toads; nor is a long life necessarily an healthy one. If passions—if exaggeration of our tendencies do no other good, at all events, they assist us in over-

coming other passions. We can never neutralize any affection by reflection alone: we can scarcely moderate it; but one affection will drive out another. Love and pride, annoyance and friendship, mirth and anger, furnish examples. Nature herself—the wisest and safest of all preceptresses—employs inclination when she wants to lead man; and she knows best how this should be excited. Rapid joy exhausts by its excitement; continued cheerfulness keeps up the formative powers of life. The former acts as an irritant; the latter as a strengthening and nutritive remedy. In the same manner tumultuous anger is analogous to excessive joy; and noble displeasure to continuous cheerfulness. Here also ethics and dietetics are combined in a remarkable manner. The fire of wrath injures our bodily organism; while the steady flame of indignation exerts a beneficial influence on it. And do not these differences depend on circumstances or characters, and therefore on moral causes? Anger is a low grade of excitement against what is itself common, and brings us down to the level of its object. When we are angry our antagonist has attained his ends; and, so far, we are in his power. Indignation is a moral emotion which

elevates us above what is vulgar, and preserves us from what is ignoble, by teaching us to despise it. It is calm but exalted anger which plays round the lips of the Apollo Belvidere, giving unintentional evidence of his divine extraction. Plato calls the passions “fevers of the Soul,” because, like febrile affections of the body, they are crises which often cure the most deep-seated evils by a purifying and refining process. It is unnecessary to illustrate the effects of good passions by the well-known results of evil ones; this much, however, I would observe, that of all the affections Hope is the most animating, and, therefore, the most important in relation to our present subject. This heaven-born presentiment is a delicate portion of our being,—an individuality which can never be annihilated.

In the preceding remarks I may appear to plead the cause of the passions; but, to correct any such idea, I will observe, that to produce the favourable results now ascribed to them the passions must be kept in subjection; that is to say, they must be active.

When the passions exceed the line of moderation they become passive. Everything appertaining to reason may be called active, because it

is only while reasoning that man can be in a state of activity. On the other hand, everything under the control of the senses is passive, since man here succumbs to the dominion of rude physical forces. It depends on ourselves to prescribe the direction. Thus, emotion enlivens as long as it excites admiration; but let it produce sympathy and it at once enfeebles us. Violent anger is not an excitant as one might be disposed to think. The better affections are annihilated by it, and its mode of expression is of a passive kind. "It was not calmness, but the intensity of anger that moved him," says Plutarch, in speaking of the silence and apparent composure of Coriolanus, "which the ignorant," he adds, "regard as tranquillity." Strong passions, however paradoxical such an opinion may at first sight appear, rather belong to weakness. Misfortune, which subdues the innermost seat of our strength—the mind—excites the passions in a powerful manner. The boy cries, raves, and wants to dash out his brains; while the maturer man, with earnest composure, directs a course of action against the future. Gentle passions shed light on the horizon of our existence, stimulate without exhausting,

warm without consuming, and gradually fan the flame which burns in each one's breast into a steady light whose beams diffuse happiness around. They are the insignia of that true fortitude which never abandons the sceptre of mental dominion.

Kant had, probably, similar ideas in view when he attempted to distinguish between bracing and relaxing affections. In reference to this point he makes a remark which is too beautiful to be passed over in silence. An observation of Saussure, that "there reigns a certain insipid dreariness in the mountains of Bonhomme," awakened the following train of thought in his mind: "Saussure," he observes, "is therefore acquainted with another and more interesting species of sadness, excited perhaps by the aspect of a solitude from which man has, by the force of his genius, reaped a living. There is, therefore, a species of sadness belonging to the bracing emotions, and which bears the same relation to a relaxing sadness as the sublime does to the beautiful." How deep and comprehensive is this remark! The pain felt by a noble mind, whether it arise from bereavement, and thus like

"The lightning's flash
Reveals what it destroys,"

or from the petty cares which beset our weary existence in its eternal revolution about the vanity of this world, is never depressing; it is always a brave and elevating sentiment—a kind of suffering pride which alone overcomes the force of adversity.

Nature has also expressed her will in the distinction of the sexes, ordaining that tender emotions should afford comfort to the gentler sex, while man finds his support in vigorous efforts of the mind. On this active and passive state of feeling depend the different internal relations of man and woman, whilst the world of thought is the same for both. These few hints may suffice. I have been brief, for my limits will not admit of full discussion.

Is it necessary, on the other hand, to waste a word upon the effects of mental emotion on the body? Will any one assert that we can voluntarily produce the same violent shocks as those which impetuous affections often excite, even against our will?*

* History and personal experience furnish us with innumerable examples. When the dumb son of Croesus saw the

Who is unacquainted with the sparkling eye, the full and quick pulse, the free respiration, the glowing colour, and serene brow of the joyous? Who is not familiar with the trembling aspect, the stammering hesitation, the cold ruffled skin, the bristling hair, the palpitating heart, the uneasiness, the impeded respiration, the paleness, the low pulse, and all the other symptoms occasioned by fear? With the slow, oppressed breathing, interrupted by sobs, the

enemy's sword raised above his father's head, he suddenly cried out, "Man, slay not Cræsus!" Another dumb person recovered his powers of speech, through anger, on seeing the woman whom he thought had bewitched him. Effects such as these are found but too often in the works of poets, too seldom in the practice of physicians. The psychological experiment of the Eastern physician, who cured an attack of paralysis by exciting shame, has not been repeated often enough. Nor need I allude to Boerhave's well-known cure of epilepsy by means of fever, at the Harlem poor-house, as to the case which I have already recorded from the practice of Herz. Keeping in view the object of this work, I have only alluded to *beneficial* results; but examples of a contrary kind are still more numerous. The animal fluids are poisoned by anger; sudden grief or joy has occasioned death; and those who are curious on this point will find abundant satisfaction from the numerous histories of this kind which Zimmermann has thought worthy of preservation in his work on this subject.—(See chap. xi.)

cold, pallid, wrinkled skin, the slow tottering gait, and the weak pulse of the hopeless? With the soft agitated blush of shame, or the pallor of contemptible envy? With the beaming countenance of requited love, or the yearning expression of disappointed affection? With the spasmodic feeling of the throat and chest which accompanies jealousy? . With the constricting pain which agitates the breast of the jealous man; the storm in the veins of the angry one, his inflamed countenance, his gasping breath, his beating pulse, wild countenance, and all the premonitory symptoms of apoplexy?

The German rhyme between the words *schmerz* (smart) and *herz* (heart) is not a mere discovery of the poets; for the heart is sensibly affected by passion, which always commences its physical effects by disturbing the circulation of blood. Many physicians have noticed the injurious effects produced by disappointed hope; and have even supposed it specially to aid the access of pulmonary consumption. The extent to which remorse—the bitterest of all our feelings—depresses the victims whom it tortures should be seen by all persons as a warning.

The effects of temperament and passion may be counteracted in three different ways, as I have already observed—by habit, by reason, and by the passions.

The faculty of accustoming ourselves to any one thing is a beneficent arrangement of Providence for securing the continuance of human life. Habit is the vital force which enables life to maintain itself, and slowly to assimilate foreign elements to itself. The essence of all morality consists in accustoming ourselves to what is right; and mental dietetics are based on the same principle. Reason never acts during a moment of emotion; but she enables us to prevent the occurrence of such moments by gradually subjecting each nascent inclination, each germ of passion to the control of habit. True repose is not an absence of, but a well-adjusted balance between all movements.

I have already spoken of the manner in which the passions suppress one another. But they may also excite one another; the active rousing those which are active, and the passive those of a similar nature. Hence we have only to set in movement that particular passion in an individual which is most accordant with his present

disposition ; by degrees the other strings will be touched, until the whole instrument of life is set in the key which permits him to evoke the proper song of his existence. For it is not silence but harmony which is required. And here, if I may be permitted to quote myself, I will close the present chapter with a few words which I wrote on a former occasion : " Divine apathy and animal indifference are too often confounded together. The latter is the condition of the caterpillar, the former of the butterfly."

I do not believe I can confer a greater obligation on my readers than by completing my own brief remarks on the passions, with the following chapter. It has been remodelled from an old treatise on the subject, which is probably now inaccessible to the general public.

VIII.

THE AFFECTIONS.

Si quid novisti rectius istis,
Candidus imperti, si non, his utere mecum.

HORACE.

MOST writers on the affections seem to consider them not as natural movements obeying the universal law of all things, but as subjects beyond the domain of nature. Instead of studying man, they sneer, despise, or wonder at him.

For my part, I would reason in the following manner. Nothing occurs in nature at which we can cavil, for she is always and everywhere the same, following one unchanging law. Hatred, anger, envy, &c., must therefore be governed by the same necessity as everything else. These affections depend on determinate causes, by means of which they may be understood, and are endowed with determinate properties which are as worthy of our consideration as those of any other things which we delight to contemplate.

We *act* when anything, of which we are the true cause, takes place either within or without ourselves; that is to say, whenever anything follows from our being which we can comprehend by it. We *suffer* when anything takes place within us, of which we are only in part the true cause. Affections are things which affect our body in such a manner that its power of acting is either increased or diminished. When we are the true cause of such affections, they become action; when not, they are sufferings. Thus the mind acts much, and suffers much—while true to itself and possessing clear ideas, it *acts*; when it errs, it *suffers*. From the preceding remarks it follows that the more the mind yields to passion the more it errs; and the more it adapts itself to truth the more active it will be. Joy is an affection which elevates the mind to a higher state of perfection. Sadness deprives the mind of its active force. Love is joy associated with the notion of an external cause; and hatred is nothing but sadness produced in the same manner. The resemblance of any object to another which formerly excited joy or sorrow, will awaken feelings of love or hatred. The cause of these feelings

cannot always be clearly ascertained; but we term the affections sympathy and antipathy. The weakness of mind which disables man from controlling his affections, I call *servility*. The mind has abdicated its right of rule; and the man is compelled to follow the worse part, while he approves of the better. From the intimate connexion between body and mind, we are induced to conclude that the latter is thus thrown under the control of external nature, of which it forms a part. Let us then educate our minds to joy; since tears, and sighs, and fears, are symptoms of an enfeebled spirit, and obstacles both to virtue and to health. The more healthy the body the more readily will it furnish the mind with materials calculated to promote its development and increase its powers.

I shall now endeavour to explain the nature of the joy to which I have alluded. We act according to reason when we do that which Nature enjoins. Now the nature of everything constantly strives to maintain its existence. A free man is not likely to make his own death the frequent subject of his thoughts; and his wisdom will rather lead him to contemplate the continuance of life than its termination. An

independent man, that is, one who lives according to reason, will not be ruled by fear; but will endeavour to maintain his existence by action. He endeavours to understand things as they are, and to remove whatever impedes true knowledge, as hatred, anger, envy, pride, &c., in order to pass his life in cheerfulness and activity.

All our tendencies and impulses are derived from a natural necessity, and in such a way that they are only conceivable through it, as their immediate cause, or in so far as we regard ourselves as parts of nature, irrespective of all other individuals. Those impulses which thus depend on our being are related to the mind, in so far as its ideas are clear: but other impulses do not depend on the mind, except so far as it labours under erroneous impressions. The power of these latter cannot be regarded as human, since it arises from things independent of ourselves. Hence the one class are termed *actions*, and the other *passions*. The former, giving evidence of our strength, are always good; the latter, indicating our weakness or ignorance, are sometimes good, sometimes evil. Full cultivation of the reasoning power is therefore most useful to life; and in this lies

all human happiness, since happiness is nothing more than peace of mind, and springs from the contemplation of God. And cultivation of the mind is nothing more than learning to recognise God in the laws of his creation. The highest aim of man, and the means by which he must endeavour to control all other desires, is, therefore, that of learning to know himself and all things included within the sphere of his capacity.

An affection ceases to be a passion as soon as we form a clear idea of it; for all passion is a distorted idea. Now, there is no affection of which a correct idea may not be formed. For we have a clear idea of that which we apprehend in connexion with the laws of the universe, and the sense of eternal justice. From hence we learn, first, how considerably man may diminish those sufferings which arise from affections; and secondly, that the actions and passions of men are derived from the same impulse. It is the nature of mortal man to desire that others should regulate their conduct according to their own inclination. This desire may become a passion; we call it presumption when uncontrolled by reason; but it

is a virtuous sentiment, manifested by active efforts in those who live for their spiritual being. Thus all impulses are passions when they arise from distorted conceptions; and they are actions when admitting of clear recognition.

To understand our affections, therefore, is the most elevated and effectual means of subduing them; at least we are unacquainted with any other, for the strength of our mind consists solely in the capacity of forming clear ideas.

In proportion as our reason can comprehend the necessity of things, so will it control the passions more perfectly, and suffering be therefore diminished. In proportion as every relation of life is understood in this view, so will our power of self-control be increased. Experience confirms this fact. Affliction for the loss of a beloved object is mitigated by the consciousness that nothing could have saved it. No one thinks of pitying an infant because it is unable to walk or speak. But if the majority of men were born full grown adults, and a few only born as children, then we should pity the latter, because infancy with its imperfections would appear to be an exception to Nature's laws, and not a natural necessity of our being.

Until we attain a clear idea of our inclinations, the best line of conduct we can pursue is to act uprightly; and establish for ourselves certain rules, adapting them to the various conditions of our existence, so as to penetrate and purify our whole life. Among these rules, I would include the conviction that hatred may be subdued by love; and to impress this axiom more strongly on the mind, we should remember the blessings conferred by love on the human race. We should reflect that men act from unalterable impulses; and above all, that in regulating our thoughts we should always fix our eyes on that which is good, so that a sentiment of joyfulness may excite us to active efforts in the race of life. If glory have attractions for you, then reflect on all that is noble and good in that passion, and on the means by which glory may be best acquired; but think not of its miseries and fleeting nature, for these belong to morbid trains of thought. Such sombre ideas disturb the mind of the ambitious whose plans have been defeated, and who endeavour to appear wise while they pour forth the bitterness of their spleen. It is certain that the very men who are constantly de-

claiming against the nothingness of fame, most ardently desire to attain it. In like manner the impoverished miser complains of the misuse of money, and of the vices of the rich; the disappointed lover accuses the fickleness of the sex; while both only increase their misery by regret, evincing at once want of resignation, and envy of the happiness enjoyed by others.

Nothing can overcome an affection except a stronger one. These latter are of the active kind, and depend on the mind. The more comprehensive the mind is, and the more thoroughly it is enabled to refer all individual things to a single source, the more powerful will these affections be. But the human mind has the power of referring the image of all things to the idea of the Godhead—the highest idea to which it can attain. Hence, the love of God is the purest, best, and strongest of all human affections. This love absorbs all other affections; it fills the mind in which it dwells with a clear light, and in naming it I have expressed all that can be said with reference to a proper control of the passions. This sentiment, however, is also founded on knowledge, like all other active qualities which spring from the same source.

The more complete our knowledge of individual things, the nearer do we approach a knowledge of the Most High. From it is derived the most intense inward satisfaction that man can conceive. It is the joyousness of which I have already spoken. Love, as I said, is nothing but joy accompanied by a knowledge of the cause which produces it; but that joy which enables us to comprehend all things, since we perceive that God is their cause, must engender everlasting love. Invincible itself, it overcometh all things.

We now clearly understand on what our whole salvation, happiness, and health depend—on a constant, unchanging love of God. Men follow another creed. They think themselves free when they obey their lusts; while submission to eternal laws is regarded by them as an abandoning of their rights. They are unaware that happiness is not the reward of love, but love itself; that we are not happy because we control our passions, but that we control them because we are happy.

I have now completed all that I proposed to say relative to freedom of mind and its power over the passions. We can now understand the

superior efficacy of wisdom. The thoughtless man, tossed on a sea of troubles, never enjoys self-satisfaction; he lives without a knowledge of God, of himself, of the world, and only ceases to suffer when he ceases to be. The wise man, on the contrary, ever mindful of God and of the eternal laws of necessity, is unmoved by storms and never ceases to be or to act.

The road which I point out may seem steep and difficult; but those who seek shall find. Yea! truly that must be a difficult path which is so seldom trodden. Were the goal near to us, and easily reached, the competitors would be numerous; but all that is noble is difficult and rarely attained.

IX.

OSCILLATION.

I hailed my pain as the symbol of general vitality ; I seemed to feel and see the eternal conflict which creates and maintains all things in this vast universe of endless force and endless strife.—F. VON SCHLEGEL.

THE life of man, like that of everything in nature, is made up of contrasts which succeed, accompany, and cause each other. The universe itself is governed by a law of equilibrium in which all these opposing forces are lost, even during their manifestation—an eternal pulsation of nature propelling life through the arteries of endless worlds. Even in the silent and regular course of vegetation—the tender offspring of peace and calm—Nature works after the same law, and conceals a profound contrast. She builds up the plant from joint to joint, in order, as it were, to concentrate her force, and act with renewed vigour from different points. We find

the same type ruling throughout all nature. In the sphere of creation there is no advantage without its deficiency, no gain without a loss, no rise without a fall, and no discord without its harmony. In the same manner the smaller sphere of human existence is marked by a constant alternation of tension and relaxation, of sleep and waking, of joy and sorrow—like the alternate inspirations and expirations of the vital air. Our existence is a perpetual circulation caused by such vibrations; and the more powerful the movement in one direction, the more forcible will necessarily be the opposite motion which it evokes. A natural philosopher has described these processes in the following manner. "If a man walk too fast at one moment, he must walk with proportionate slowness during the succeeding one. Immoderate exercise must be followed by an equal degree of rest. He who crowds the labour of two days into one must pay the penalty by an extra day's inactivity. The greater our excitement while awake, the deeper and longer will be our sleep; and the more we neglect to refresh the body with the necessary amount of sleep, the greater will be the lassitude and

fatigue which we experience. The livelier a feeling, the sooner it becomes extinguished. Violent desires are easily satisfied, and excessive anger readily burns out. The wildest animals are the most susceptible of being tamed, and the fearful rage of the lion is capable of being exchanged for unexampled gentleness. The individual is resigned to ordinary life in proportion to his strength and freedom of action."

When the conflicting forces now spoken of succeed each other rapidly, forcibly, and increasingly, we can easily conceive that the vital principle must be worn away with proportionate rapidity. Should life incline permanently in the same direction, the alternation of action necessary for life is destroyed. Everything, therefore, depends on the proper management of these contrasts; and happy are they who can arouse their faculties from a death-like sleep by exciting within them a conflict which recalls their youthful energies; or they who can put an end to internal conflicts, and resume their equilibrium, by summoning to their aid fortitude and mental repose. One momentum may be increased or diminished by another, and *herein lies the fundamental law of mental dietetics*. But

a man must learn to know and govern himself, before he can understand this law, or apply it with advantage. We may bestow the greatest care on what we eat and drink; regulate exercise and rest; learn by heart whole treatises on the art of living long, or on the effect of feeling, will, and thought on the well-being of Man. More than this is necessary—we must learn to know and to govern ourselves; we must cultivate our moral and intellectual faculties; and then only shall we know what is meant by the term health—by the integrity of man. Let no one say to himself, “I am incapable of such efforts as these.” To every reader of these lines has been given an inner life, on the existence of which all our necessities depend, and a mind which is, or may be rendered, capable of governing the body—and every one *can* do what he *should* do.

It is unnecessary to speak of the necessity of pleasure and relaxation after intervals of action and endurance; or of the impulse which leads us to satisfy such requirements. We have all experienced the gentle, yet irresistible power with which sleep closes the eyes after repeated exertions. The ardent student, toiling restlessly

in the laborious pursuit of knowledge, should never neglect this call of beneficent nature; for it can never with impunity be neglected. Had Mephistopheles conferred no other service on Faust than easing him for a while of his cloak of learning, the doctor would have had little cause for despair. But the act of awaking is regulated by different principles from those which govern the act of going to sleep. In the former case, the hand of force is often necessary. Life points out with an iron staff the path which each individual should follow. Happy is the man who sees this staff, and follows the path; instead of tarrying by the way until weary, and, incapable of further exertion, he sinks bleeding to the ground. A high degree of mental culture, or a delicate tact, possessed by few, are required to distinguish the necessity of earnestness, or even of pain, in the midst of enjoyment. "What is that mysterious power," asks Salvandy, "which always mingles some sorrow with our most exquisite pleasures; as if a man could not partake of the latter without being unfaithful to his mission in this life?" This remark applies to dietetics as well as to morality. Pain not only seasons, but is necessary to the existence of a real living pleasure;

just as the development and circuit of the day could not occur without night. Nature never acts without a knowledge of what she does; and gives us nothing without having seasoned it with love. True, she has given thorns to the rose; and he who would free us from all pain, would, at the same time, deprive us of every enjoyment. Annoyance is man's leaven—the element of movement, without which we should grow mouldy. Incurable depression of spirits is often dispelled by a slight annoyance arising from incidental causes. Wealthy and inactive persons, who have nothing left to wish for, are the earliest victims of hypochondriasis; and these are the very men whom thoughtless persons deem happy, because they appear to revel in the fullness of earthly enjoyments. But a strong, though hidden impulse urges them incessantly to torment themselves, while they vainly endeavour to supply those wants which pleasure alone cannot satisfy. The wise man, on the contrary, forestals those feelings, and seeks the dark shadows which inevitably cross our path in the weary pilgrimage of life. Gloom and obscurity are inseparable from all the different phases of human existence. Temptation lowers over the

dazzling meridian of fortune as well as over the night of sorrow. He who has learned to recognize this truth will venerate the goodness of Providence, instead of vainly pondering on the origin of evil ; and not only listen to the warning voice of suffering amidst the intoxication of joy, but even endeavour to draw it forth from the innermost recesses of his being. This is the highest principle in the art of life—the summit of mental dietetics. It is most difficult to reach, but he who mounts to the top will be most amply rewarded.

When the present work first appeared, this chapter was received with much opposition, even by those who most entered into the spirit of the other portions. “Whence come the charm and benefit of a southern climate?” inquired a highly-gifted woman, in reference to this subject, “if not from its being an emblem of eternal spring? Or what clearer idea can we form of a better state of existence than this constant serenity? Is it not a sad, ascetic view, to regard pain and evil as necessary concomitants of life; or to suppose man ordained to perpetual sorrow? No, no; we are here to be happy and rejoice—to diffuse over the earth what is good and beau-

tiful. Such is the destination of man, unless we believe life to be a dream. All the fair aspirations of a noble soul must be realized at some period, if they be the promises of a loving Deity, not the mockery of a demon." With what pleasure have I listened to these plausible arguments of a pure and virtuous mind; and who would not allow himself to be seduced by a dream, without which life is a dreary waste? But we awake from the dream, and discover that we must *be*, and act in the world which *is*—forgetting the lovely vision for a while, that it may re-appear more true and enduring in another world.

Desire and presentiment have been given to man to elevate him to higher things, not to lower him to earthly realities. They ought only to indicate, and not to annihilate by fulfilment, like the significant Greek fable of Semele and the divinity who appeared to her in accordance with her urgent prayers. The holiest duty of man is to cultivate that which is exalted—not to debase it by too great familiarity. There is only one Sabbath for every week. If we contemplate life through our perceptions and not through our desires, we shall soon learn to

accept things as they are, and shall be content to leave the pure and cloudless sky of the east to those who can paint with strong light untempered by shadow. If the world allotted to us were more perfect, then would our organization have been likewise more perfect; but in the actual state of man, sorrow is the condition of pleasure, and suffering is the deep-seated root of life and activity. And who is the more likely to attain perfection—he whose heart is filled with unsatisfied desires, or he whose understanding is guided by the realities of life? The object of mental dietetics is to attain a state of contented enjoyment; and this being so, I may ask, are we not far more likely to gain our end by living with calm resignation in the present world, than by longing after a different one? Let us, then, hold fast to established doctrines, and admit the well-known axioms of Count Veri, that life consists in activity; that the feeling of an impediment to this activity is pain; that the feeling of its promotion is pleasure. No such furtherance can be effected without the pre-existence of some impediment, however trifling. Pleasure, therefore, pre-supposes a condition of suffering. When we attempt

to elevate our vital activity above its normal proportion we create an impediment. Health, therefore, consists in this proper proportion. On studying with attention our own nature we become conscious of a perpetual impulse to change our condition in life. Present pleasure cannot be this impulse; and hence it becomes evident that man lives in a constant state of suffering, which is the spur of human activity. In the lot of man we find nothing lasting except pain and sorrow. Pleasure is not positive enjoyment, but merely an alleviation of suffering.

These views may appear gloomy, but really they are not so. They are a faithful reflection of life—a marvellous elucidation of human destiny. The profound conceptions which they reveal deserve to be followed through all their ramifications; for they disclose to him who pursues their course, the secrets of the moral as well as the natural world. The laws of nature show that they are subservient to a still higher law. The blending together of pain and pleasure in the labyrinth of human existence is—to speak humanly—a symbol of the divine purpose. Suffering is necessary for the formation of character—pleasure, for cultivation of the mind. Man

individually, mankind collectively, should ripen in both respects. The object of all man's efforts should be, not to gratify his desires, but to fulfil his duties; for in the latter lies all true gratification. The tasteless monotony of gratified desires teaches the thoughtless through satiety—although too late—to value exertion; and the same insatiable desire, which neither heaven nor earth can satisfy, leads the fool to despair, and the sensible man to contentment.

The whole life of man would be a weary void—a blank—a nothing—without the eternal thorn which urges him to write down in the sweat of his brow that he suffers; in other words, that he lives. Happiness consists in this proclamation. Let him, then, announce it in words, acts, and joys; for these are the interludes of his sufferings. We have no other idea of happiness; suffice it if this can render us happy. If the apparent value of life be diminished by this view—which assuredly will not present itself to the mind of youth, and is already known to the undeceived man—it will gain in true importance. Happiness is uncertain and evanescent; but duty is certain and everlasting. Providence instituted suffering as a means of creating

consolation; and it is this painful contrast in our nature which affords confirmation of our higher destiny. No smile is sweeter than the one which struggles for mastery with the still trickling tear; no desire is more noble or more lasting than an insatiable one; no man enjoys more truly than he who renounces the gratification of his desires; and thus the truest symbol of human life will ever be a cross encircled with roses.

The practical object of the present work—to advise a course of action—compels me, with regret, to interrupt a line of considerations which might prove rich in information to him who with earnestness examines the tangled web of human life.

Having established the existence of opposite elements in the nature of man, it remains for me to consider the alternations which take place in all the circles of our action or suffering; and the balance that exists amid these various oscillations, in order to turn the law, when discovered, to our profit.

Pleasure and pain are expressions of man's tenderest sphere—the perceptive. The same holds good of the less delicate rest and move-

ment. Activity causes and constitutes life; but too intense or prolonged activity may prove fatal to its harmony, and must, therefore, be moderated. The same law prevails in the most material sphere of human organization, where we find that contentment and moderation preserve a due equilibrium between the alternate maintenance and expenditure of our forces. Even in the highest circle of human activity—that of thought—the same oscillation is indispensably necessary. The most profound thinkers on the nature of thought are forced to adopt this conclusion, and to admit, as an intelligent woman once observed in reference to poets, that man's well-being consists in an alternation between consciousness and unconsciousness. None but a pedant would attempt to submit such an equilibrium to scholastic rules, or, manual in hand, to meet every fleeting moment of this changeful life with a dogmatic order of "thus far and no farther." We cannot advance or retard the life of man like the hands of a watch. By no act of consciousness can we escape consciousness itself; but we can excite or yield to certain dispositions within ourselves. A sensible, yet half-involuntary contemplation of life

in a pleasing point of view is most favourable to the growth of contentment and health; it keeps up a wholesome medium between concentrated attention and relaxation; occupies while it calms us; and never suffers observation of ourselves to be carried to morbid anxiety, but constantly associates it with that of the external world. This is a condition which the cultivated man alone, alive to the tenderer perceptions of our nature, can experience. Words explain it with difficulty; because all mental conditions are more or less mysterious. The reflective Schelver has named it life's holy instinct, and describes it in his usual poetic manner. "Let man consult his own experience to learn when and where he enjoyed perfect felicity. Was it not, when, unconsciously carried forward by the wheel of life, he was floating in a state of conscious existence? The man who scarcely belongs to himself is lost in the bliss of living. He enjoys, without knowing what he enjoys; and the only feeling he is conscious of is the calm emotion of the heart which comprehendeth not itself. His actions spring from his mind, like flowers and fruits from the tough wood. They are not, as many imagine, the re-

sults of premeditation; but the natural, easy, simple, and ordinary manifestations in which alone he finds his happiness. When a man attempts to seize passing objects with hasty eagerness, he must abandon those already in his possession. It is an error to seize on that which he should receive. All is there, and nothing is wanting, save that all should be for *him*. Let him but calmly gather what lies in his path, and the gates of the world will open before him. Hence the child is gifted with so expansive a memory, that it can pass over the universe of things without fixing on a single object. Hence remembrance and satisfaction return to the heart of the adult, when the powerful influence of the will has been moderated. Man finds refuge in the holy instinct of his life from the conflict of desires and wants, and his sole care should be to preserve it."

We are now prepared to admit that the highest aim of the art of living well, and consequently of mental regimen, must be to understand ourselves aright without a painful observance of our feelings; to maintain a cheerful interest in all things around and within us; to let all things act on us, yet learn how to assim-

late their action ; and, amidst all changes, to remain ourselves unchanged. He who has attained this knowledge is all in all things, to himself—teacher, friend, opponent, protector, physician ! All life works in pulses. Our progression is a constant falling, from right to left, and the reverse ; and in like manner the harmonious progress of existence consists in an admirable balance of alternating oppositions, varying in each individual, but more readily learned by the exercise of our powers than by reflection.

From the preceding observations it follows that when man attains that state in which he is unconscious of the existence of any single organ, but feels that the free manifestation of his active powers is the general expression of his being, then is he completely sound and perfect. When we feel that we have a heart or a stomach, we may be sure that some derangement exists in those organs ; whereas, health consists in our not feeling any one part of the organization more than another. The succeeding chapter will afford an opportunity of testing these fruits of experience by a melancholy phenomenon.

X.

HYPOCHONDRIASIS.

Little things are the curse of life. We are consumed by wretched cares for the present day—for our bodily wants. Nourish therefore the godlike part of our nature—the impulse of admiration!—BULWER.

A TREATISE on mental dietetics would be imperfect without some special notice of that most irrational and melancholy of all human torments, *hypochondriasis*. Reason, morality, wit, and even religion, have endeavoured by every possible means to exorcise this demon. By pamphlets and by books—in tragedy and in comedy—from the pulpit and on the stage, it has been denounced and ridiculed. All in vain; for this foster-brother of care creeps in through the keyhole, and wraps himself so closely in the mantle of prudence that few are tempted to repel him. But shall not we strive to strip his mantle from him—we who have suffered like others from his blood-stained grasp?

We have accused him of egoism; but this affects him not, for he has become fashionable, and knows that selfishness passes for wit and independence of mind. Our best plan will be to prove that he is *nothing*; and that I shall now endeavour to do in the most earnest manner.

“When men begin to reflect on their physical and moral condition,” once observed a venerable authority over Wieland’s grave, “they are generally ill. The ‘common malady of all men is life.’” This gives a perfect idea of the species of hypochondriasis to which I now refer, and which is specially connected with mental dietetics. There is another species, but that one must be left in the hands of the physician. It is not enough to say that the form of which I treat is an imaginary disease. We have quite enough of reality without invoking the imagination. The health of all men in this world is only relative; each one contains within himself the germ of which he is ultimately to die. It may be discovered without much difficulty, but the discovery will only accelerate its development. So long as we are well enough to do our daily work, and, that work over, to enjoy the pleasures of repose, it is our duty, both in a

social and dietetic point of view, to think no more about our bodies. Pain is an arrogant nothing, which becomes something as soon as we acknowledge its existence. Shame on us, then, if we honour, fondle, and cherish it, until it envelopes us in its growth. *It* is only great so long as *we* are small. Who can imagine a Themistocles or a Regulus feeling his own pulse, or examining his tongue in the glass? Nay, I would go still further: I would endeavour to expel the evil by that very fear whence it derives its origin. Does fear augment or diminish the malady? Nothing in the world makes a man sooner old than the constant fear of becoming so.

Many centuries ago the Persian sage Attar proclaimed that five things shortened the life of man. The first is to know want in old age; the second is protracted disease; the third is wandering exile; the fourth is constant thought of the grave; the fifth is the approach of the angel of death. The last cause here assigned is equivalent to fear; and can hypochondriasis exist without fear? Does not its victim die daily from the fear of dying? These are the weak-minded persons, of whom I remarked, in a former chapter, that even the physician

whom they constantly seek must despise them. These men become volunteers in the ranks of medicine; they overload their minds with whole courses of physic; they copy prescriptions from printed formulæ; and it was to one of this class that Marcus Herz once wittily remarked, "My dear friend, an error of the press will assuredly, some day or other, be the death of you." These are the ciphers whom the divine Plato banished from his republic. To him they were well known, and how could it be otherwise? How could such men fail to exist in Athens—the Paris or London of antiquity? "Is it not disgraceful," exclaims his Socrates Silenos, "that men should have recourse to the healing art, not for wounds or inevitable diseases, but for conditions caused by their own indolence or luxury, and for which the learned descendants of Æsculapius must first invent names? When a carpenter falls ill he seeks a doctor, and demands to be cured by the most active means. But if the physician ordain a thousand petty restrictions and precautions, he tells him at once that he has no time to be sick, and cannot occupy his mind with thoughts about illness to the neglect of his work. He bids his doctor

farewell, returns home, resumes his daily occupation, and is restored to health. But if his vital force be too far reduced to overcome the disease, he takes leave of life, and is freed from a miserable existence. So much for the carpenter; and why should he who has a higher calling cherish less noble feelings? There is nothing in this world which so completely hinders a man from making a proper claim on life as this excessive care of his body. It impedes the due performance of domestic duties, cripples the efficiency of the warrior, and the usefulness of the citizen. It incapacitates us from the pursuit of all arts and sciences; checks thought and reflection, by a constant brooding over self-engendered evils; and prevents a man from being either wise or good. *Æsculapius* cured heroes of their wounds; but we nowhere read that he employed tedious methods of treatment to secure a long and miserable existence to those wretched beings who are always complaining of indisposition, and beget another generation as degenerate and miserable as themselves. In the case of men debilitated by excess or natural conformation, he did not regard a prolonged life as a benefit either to them-

selves or their fellow-citizens; nor was his art designed for such, even were they as rich as Croesus."

Although this mode of viewing the subject may appear rather antiquated to us who are the children of a very differently constituted world, it still contains much from which we may derive instruction. The clear-minded men of former times considered one species of hypochondriasis—of which we are *not* speaking—as a disease, and referred it to the physician for treatment; but they, like us, considered that form of which I now speak as a nothing. Kant, one of the clearest and most sensible of men, who had himself been perplexed by this *Nothing*, proceeds, after the manner of a true German philosopher, to annihilate whatever obstructs his path, and declares all men devoid of sense who would convert this species into a reality. "When a man is troubled with fancies let him ask himself whether they have any real object. If he can find none, or if he discover that the causes of uneasiness under which he labours are inevitable, let him arrange his feelings accordingly—in other words, let him cast away his anxiety as if it in no way concerned

him, and direct his attentions to those occupations in which he is concerned." These precepts I cordially adopt, and I know, moreover, that the Aristotle of Kœnigsberg applied them in practice. The struggle was great, for his desponding feelings were connected with narrowness of the chest, impeding the free action of the lungs; yet he lived to an advanced age. Lichtenberg, the most intellectual of all humorists, and the most whimsical of all intellectual men, conceived a similar idea of hypochondriasis. "There are," says he, "serious diseases of which men may die; there are others, not fatal in themselves, but readily observed and felt; and lastly, there are some complaints which it would almost require a microscope to discover. But these latter are all the more horrible on that account; and the microscope, which reveals them to us, is hypochondriasis. Were men to study all their complaints by means of the same instrument, they would have the satisfaction of being ill every day of their lives." Pulmonary consumption forms a frequent subject of hypochondriacal delusion; and this is, in great measure, owing to the sentimental descriptions which novel writers give of the disease. More

than half a century ago Weikard described a peculiar form of mental delusion, under the name of "Imaginary consumption." The consumptive patient coughs; but every one who coughs has not got consumption. The same remark applies to all other forms and symptoms of disease. The physician alone is able to decide on their character or signification; to the uninitiated they are nothing.

The only means of rescuing ourselves from this nothing, is constantly to deny it. A denied nonentity becomes an entity, and there is no other entity except activity—the purest, the only true enjoyment of living beings. As the form of hypochondriasm now alluded to is not a disease, it may be annihilated by disease. As Lichtenberg's brother genius correctly observes, "Make the hypochondriac ill, that he may know what illness really is, and you cure him. Leave the hypochondriac to be hypochondriacal, for otherwise he will not know what to do with himself." In whatever light we may regard this morbid condition—whether as weakness, imagination, laziness, stupidity, selfishness, disease, or incipient madness—and it is all these, or even more than these, for its name is *legion*,

and it comes from the prince of evil—still activity will ever be the angel who guards with flaming sword the entrance to that paradise inhabited by those who remain true to Nature and their duties. Rest is neither due nor profitable until it is needed. As those hypochondriacs who want nothing (or whom nothing torments) neither excite nor require compassion, I do not see why they should not be pronounced rude and unsocial, as they really are, and expelled from society under this badge of their disgrace. Such treatment might, perhaps, contribute to their cure, and end the matter more speedily than any philosophical discussion. Let them, then, undergo torture for their own good; since, if society ever had the right of inflicting torture, it is surely here. Does not the poet say—

“Der hypochonder ist bald curirt,
Wenn dich das Leben recht cujonirt.”*

Hypochondriasis cannot exist when the regimen of the mind is directed by the rules already laid down in a former part of this work. Show

* These untranslatable lines signify—

“Hypochondriasis is soon cured
When life carries it well down.”

me, if you can, a man who, wrapped in gentle thoughts, advances with steady purpose along the path of life; whose eye is fixed with clearness on the world around him; whose forces, actions, and enjoyments are harmoniously fused together. Show me, if you can, a man thus soundly constituted, who is at the same time hypochondriacal? I cannot be more explicit on this subject, without exposing myself to repetition; yet this oft-discussed *nothing*, this dissatisfaction with everything, this type of our age, presents so many important points for consideration, that I feel myself forced not to spare it.

The species of hypochondriasis now alluded to is specially promoted by three dispositions of the mind—viz., selfishness, indolence, and pedantry. I have already examined the influence of the two former; but the latter is too often overlooked in the intercourse of life, being often attributed to those who are free from it, and the least sought where it might be the most readily found. Pedantry does not consist in an attention to order and punctuality, which we can hardly conceive to exist in excess, but in that spirit of littleness which neglects the

end for the means, and is a slave to self-created or conventional idols. The placid student, who neglects the world for the better society of his books, and may, perhaps, have forgotten the more polished usages of life, is not a pedant; although *he* is a pedant who sacrifices to the conventional accessories of literature that world of thought which ought to be represented, and not displaced by the words of the book; who esteems a particular edition of Aristotle more than his precepts; and who venerates for their antiquity the records of bygone times rather than the spirit they breathe, or the objects which they unconsciously promote. The most absurd of all pedants, though probably the least disposed to believe himself so, is the drawing-room fop, whose atmosphere is fashion, and all the petty forms which an erroneous idea of the means conducive to agreeable social intercourse has converted into independent objects. To him the trifles of life are realities, and the realities of life trifles.

And here I would direct attention to the motto of the present chapter, in order to illustrate the form of pedantry to which I now refer. What can be more petty than to squander away

one's better existence in unceasing complaints about our bodily ailments? We might justly denominate hypochondriasis the vanity of health; for this insane and whimsical self-delusion hurries its victim towards a spiritual death as rapidly as it strives, in childish terror, to flee from the phantom of bodily death, which ever flits before it. But hypochondriasis delights in its own weakness; and, in this age of polished nothingness, has even contrived to set up an idol in which it seeks palliation and a source of self-glorification. Let us examine these pretensions.

Much has been said and written on the melancholy of distinguished men. The Stagirite's observation "that men of noble and reflective minds are generally disposed to sadness," would seem to have some foundation. Camoens and Tasso, Young and Lord Byron, pass before us shrouded in ideal gloom. The hypochondriasis of the two former has been represented for our edification on the stage; and we affect to sympathize with the afflictions of the latter. Great men must be allowed to explain the nature and origin of their failings; but with regard to modern poetry I must hazard a few observations.

Here we have not to do with great men, but with morbid conditions; and to speak the plain truth, the nurse of modern literature is a morose, debilitating, and mawkish spirit of hypochondriasis. To correct the tribe of our younger poets we shall soon require the aid of a physician, not of a critic. Their history may be told in a few words. A young man educated, or rather mis-educated, without experience, without study, without any definite tendency, without the power of exertion, or of tasting any genuine enjoyment, becomes conscious of his miserable oscillation between existence and non-existence—between not having lived and not being about to live—between a barren past and a barren future. He now takes to novel reading, frequents the theatres, compares himself to heroes or poets, and makes verses. All on a sudden the thought flashes across his mind that his unhappy condition is connected with the unfilled profundity of his feelings—with an unsatisfied yearning of the soul. He rushes headlong into the ocean of melancholy, and indulges in expressions with which the poetic springs of latter years have inundated us; he bathes in these waters, and contemplates his own image re-

flected from their surface. Camoens and Byron are the companions of his sorrows, his sufferings are of course more interesting, and will he hopes live as a second edition of theirs. His youth is thus wasted, and life, with its realities, now encompasses him. Other waves, far different from those of his fancy, now threaten to engulf him, and his misery becomes complete. Ignorant of the world and of himself he looks in vain for help or solace to the delusive structures of his poetic dreams; and he falls to the ground, crushed beneath their ruins. Such is the fate of the ungifted;—that of genuine poetic talent is, perchance, worse. Here the mind loses itself in the fearful abyss of its own essence; the poet, while he believes that he poetises, only fosters his hypochondriasis; and at last he engenders the mortal disease of internal discord, which the would-be poet only feigned. Poets of this class naturally carry their readers with them; and as now-a-days the public is everybody, and everybody must talk about literary subjects, it behoves us to direct attention to these sources of literary interest if we would save a part of our fellow men from the miseries of hypochondriasis. We cannot, perhaps, convince the *soi-*

disant Youngs and Byrons of the present day that they have anything more to learn; but as mental dietists we must leave them to their lamentations. May they profit by chewing the mournful cud of their own inefficiency! As for ourselves, *we* hold steadfastly on to life, seeking to inspire ourselves with courage, not with despair. Hippel, however, says, "The man who has learned to read, has lost one portion of his courage; if he writes verses, he has lost a double portion."

I have already enumerated reading among the means by which health of mind and body may be preserved; but book-knowledge is far inferior as a curative agent in hypochondriasis to two other means which I shall consider in a new chapter, leaving my readers, in the mean time, to discover how the egg may be made to stand on one end.

XI.

NATURE—TRUTH.

Abominable cowards! Why are you afraid to be yourselves? you were thus a thousand times better. Without being natural, we have neither grace nor unction—nothing firm, nor imposing.—NECKER.

THE sovereign cure for all human ills, and therefore the best means for preventing these evils, are Truth and Nature.

We could not, even if we would, enjoy a state of existence perfectly free and pure; for an immense or universal net of falsehood, from which there is no escape, encompasses us on all sides,—the falsehood of social intercourse, an external bondage which we cannot evade, but which sometimes inspires us with respect. It is an inconceivable folly to add to the above another self-imposed restraint; which gradually but inevitably undermines our health, and of which we are all more or less guilty.

All morality consists in truth, and all depravity in falsehood. Life and health accompany the former; the latter is destruction. Constant falsehood and painful self-restraint corrode the innermost springs of life, like a hidden poison; while we ourselves experience a morbid pleasure in feeding the worm which destroys us. Never has this art flourished so highly as at the present day; and the extent to which we pride ourselves on our weakness—like the city beauty on her pale cheeks—is only paralleled by our vanity, which regards refinement—a complication of untruths—as evincing the height of development. Thus the incurable patient often rejoices in the cessation of pain, because he is ignorant of the fact that he has ceased to suffer since he has ceased to feel; hope and satisfaction beam on his countenance, augmenting an hundredfold the grief of his surrounding friends, who are aware of his true condition. This is a faithful image of the world. No one has the courage to be what he really is. Yet the corner-stone of health is to maintain our individuality intact from every constricting influence.

All thinking men have recognised this evil, and directed the attention of their brethren to

it. "Your salvation depends on truth; be true at every breath;" and what they say to the species, the physician enjoins to the individual. To play a part throughout life must weary us out before our time; even if we could exclaim as justly as Augustus, in the closing scene, "*Plaudite.*" Hufeland has compared this condition of the mind to a continual mental convulsion—a slow nervous fever. Why, then, submit to it? Is it not more easy to be true?—to appear what we are? To man I would say, "there is no strength without truth;" and to woman, "there is no beauty without truth."

I have a discovery to reveal as easy and as difficult as that of Columbus and his egg: it is this; that genius is nothing but truth. That writer will appear original to us who, instead of consulting books on his subject, replies with truth to the questions he asks himself. In this manner he writes what the learned will read with envious surprise, and with a freshness which even poets might covet. It is certain that we should be better authors by being more moral and true. At present we are nothing because we are false, and therefore diseased. Shame and repentance are the enervating consequences which

await us on our course. Yet we might avoid this fatal tendency by assuming courage enough not to belie ourselves or others—by daring to be what we really are. Can any happiness equal the feeling that we carry our own bliss constantly with us? Always and everywhere will thought then furnish food for self-communion, imagination create a world of fancies, and life give scope to feeling, or to the promptings of a pure will.

If it be asked “what can save us from the falsehood which lies around us?” I answer—the pleasure derived from the study of nature—the enjoyment and study of which furnish us with the ether that generates and feeds the best and deepest parts of our nature. When the tender plant, which we call intellect, fades and decays in the hot-house of society, transplant it to some lonely solitude. It will there revive. The most inveterate epicurean that perhaps ever lived, after having drained to the dregs the cup of every enjoyment, was forced to admit “that the sweetest joys are those which leave the peace of the mind undisturbed.” When I reflect on the source whence this axiom came, it appears to me a most remarkable one. And to what joys

does this votary of pleasure refer? I know of only two—contemplation of mind, and the study of Nature. The earnest thinker feels himself elevated to the recognition of deep and mysterious truths, when he reflects that the beauty and grandeur of nature necessarily expand and exalt his soul, in revealing themselves to his invigorated senses. Let men say what they will in praise of society. The most they can say of it is that it teaches us to know our duty; but from solitude alone can we derive happiness. The eye which loses itself in the boundless azure of the firmament, or delights in contemplating the variegated beauties which Nature, with lavish hand, has scattered over the face of the earth, is turned aside from the turmoils which disturb and entangle the busy throng of men. Nature is ever sublime; and the thoughts inspired by her works expand so as to become imbued with her greatness.

The contemplation of Nature teaches man that he is but an atom of one stupendous whole; and even in contemplating infinity, he rejoices in his own being, which enables him to appreciate the harmony of the universe. The eternal laws of Nature teach us justice; even in de-

struction she manifests her love; and with her alone dwell truth, peace, and love.

“Solitary communion with Nature”—says a highly gifted woman—“exerts a magical effect; it brings us nearer to what we love, and removes us from what we hate. All those minds who have bequeathed to their fellow men the fruits of their communings with solitude, have been inspired with similar feelings—confessing, as a celebrated physician did, that the name of Nature excites the same feeling of veneration as that which causes us to bow the knee when they name the Almighty within the sanctuary of His temple.”

That Lessing had no feeling for the beauties of Nature is a mistake which arose from a good-humoured paradox of his, with which we sometimes endeavour to get rid of a stupid fellow. Most of the learned men who have attained a great and cheerful old age were students of Nature. It would seem as if a genuine and fruitful study of Nature required a childlike mind, such as those of Howard and Novalis; while on the other hand it communicates a childlike simplicity which carries them back to the days of their youth. Every effort of the mind,

in fact, is an inquiry into Nature; and we can only retain mental health and happiness by treating all things which surround us or dwell within us in accordance with the laws of Nature. We shall then find that just as night and day succeed each other and constantly alternate, so also does our inner life pursue its course with unvarying regularity; and we shall find with joy that our appreciation of Nature's harmony is merely an expression of that harmony itself of which our minds form a part. It is for the recognition of this truth that Nature has implanted the sentiment of her beauties in the breast of the savage and the child; it was to this truth that the contemplation of the universe led the mind of Newton; and thus is fulfilled the first and last aim of the Creator—that the creature should learn his place, and find happiness in it. How great is the comfort produced by such considerations; how soothing the balsam which they diffuse in a stream of holy vigour throughout our whole being! The man who has never felt such enjoyment may consider these remarks as empty words; but he who will seek to experience it will soon appreciate why we have placed the contemplation of Nature at the head of our

system of mental dietetics. Every man is an Antæus: if we hold only fast to mother-earth with love and faith, we shall receive from her animation and invincible strength. Nature confirms and enforces the individual capacities of each; she excites no passion, but rather renders contemptible those various passions which give rise to all diseases of the mind. Nature educates gently, surely, and steadily; and what is mental regimen but second education?

Communion with Nature bestows all the strength which, in a former part of this work, I endeavoured to prove necessary for the healthy action of the powers of the mind. Nature acts on the whole man by addressing herself to all his organs—filling imagination with grand and refreshing images—restraining the will with adamantine chains, yet giving to it firmness and consistency. Her significant silence develops him. The grand but simple operations of her universal laws serve to cultivate his mind, and fill it with animating thoughts; in the constant circle of her unvarying course all things maintain us in fitting equilibrium. Her beauties, scattered with prodigal love on all sides, through the maze of

animated worlds—blooming in humble flowers, or shining in starry orbs of light—dispel from the brow the clouds of petty care or narrow-minded hypochondriasis. Her stupendous greatness carries man beyond himself, until all his feelings, thoughts, and desires, merge in a general contemplation, which leads him gently into the arms of Religion, the understanding and vital perception of which are the last, and the highest good to which he can attain.

Having thus enforced the benefit to be derived from a contemplation of Nature, I may close my remarks on this subject. May the chord which has been struck in the sensitive spirit awaken within us kindred tones; and being ever repeated in alternate succession, may they shed beauty and holiness over the monotony of life.

And here, again, we clearly perceive how all moral and intellectual efforts, how philosophy, morality, art, social education, and mental dietetics, all tend, either voluntarily, or involuntarily, to one sole object.

But, in looking to this final result, we must ever keep in view the individual—cultivating our own narrow, individual domain, with the

same care that the husbandman tills his small, but fertile farm; for the efforts of each must ever be limited to his own part, and to that only. For the separate spheres will all finally merge into one general movement and harmony, and will thus combine to complete the idea of an universe.

“In singulis et minimis salus mundi.”

I should only revolve, like the spheres now alluded to, were I to follow up these considerations to their full extent. I therefore prefer inviting my readers to extend their consideration of the subject of the present chapter by the aid of a work which seems the production of nature, truth, and religion combined;—I allude to the self-contemplations of Marcus Aurelius.

We shall afterwards combine the practical results of our studies in a few short maxims, the half of which would suffice for the lifetime of both author and reader.

XII.

RESUMÉ.

Be thy own master, and be of good heart ^{aa} in good in well as in evil days.—MARC. AURELIUS, i. 15.

REFLECTIONS on the connexion between mind and body must be not only idle, but actually dangerous, unless pursued with a view of arriving at practical results, and moreover we really attain them. It may, therefore, be pleasing and profitable to my readers if I take a brief retrospect of the various stages through which we have passed; and embody the principles which I have inculcated, in the form of maxims. Here, however, I should add a remark which could hardly find a place at the commencement of my work.

To direct the body by the force of the mind, man must first believe that he possesses the power to do so. This faith is indispensable. I

shall leave to theorists the task of demonstrating *how* this mysterious influence may be explained; to me it seems more practical to prove its possibility by its reality. Many additional examples might be adduced to confirm this truth; but I shall content myself with a few illustrations.

Mead relates the case of a woman who recovered from a tedious illness—abdominal dropsy combined with marasmus—by fixing her mind on a particular object. This was no imaginary evil, but a positive, material disease. He likewise gives another example, that of a patient, in an advanced stage of consumption, who dissipated the most alarming symptoms by reflecting on her past life, although it was rather calculated to afford cause for everlasting remorse. Curing was cured of tertian ague by the pleasure which he derived from conversing with Meibomius—an extraordinary triumph of mental power which would scarcely be so readily attained in our more practical age. And although it must be admitted that most of these cases are the results of accident, that is to say, not directly traceable to human foresight, yet Herz, in his excellent treatise on vertigo, brings forward several examples in

which success attended the scientific application of the principle. And here I cannot avoid alluding to a case related by Dr. Cheyne, for it fully demonstrates the influence of mind over life and death. Colonel Townshend had the power, subservient to volition, of lying down on his back and appearing to be perfectly dead. The pulse gradually sunk, until it became imperceptible; a looking-glass held before the patient's mouth remained undimmed by the faintest trace of breath, and Dr. Cheyne believed that the jest had ended in reality. After the lapse of about half an hour the pulsation of the heart and radial artery began to be perceptible, and Colonel Townshend soon afterwards conversed in his usual manner with his medical attendant.

But I must, instead of accumulating examples, proceed with my recapitulation.

When man has arrived at faith in the power of the mind over the body, he must regard himself *objectively*. This is a more difficult task than we might suppose. Constant attention to our own bodily health only torments us or renders us absurd; while on the other hand no one can obtain the necessary mastery over

himself without taking heed of his own being. Here we require a keen and cheerful self-inspection—a healthy tone of humorous self-satire, which is the climax of artistic development, the essence of genuine philosophy, and the noble fruit of a moral life.

When we examine ourselves according to the impulses of our active nature, and not in accordance with some idle fancy, such as people sometimes call a system or a science, we shall find that we possess a faculty whence impressions and sensations are derived—a faculty to *will*,—and a faculty to *think*. These attributes have been examined, I trust, with some fruit. Their study has taught us to direct imagination to that which is beautiful and cheerful—to nourish our feelings with the grand and encouraging—and to cultivate both by promoting a sympathy with art. It has taught us to strengthen, purify, and ennoble the will, to direct it upon ourselves, and to regulate it by the dictates of a true and sound morality.

Self-government is the great and eternal law which life, duty, and mental dietetics enjoin upon man. They ordain him to carry out with truth and resolution the silent mandates of his con-

science. To preserve health of mind, and hence of body, we must resolve on governing ourselves; and remain through life true to this resolve. Hesitation or backsliding may occasionally occur; but a repetition of the resolve will gradually strengthen the power of volition and at last win a certain victory. Let every one, then, make this moral vow, without reservation, or right of appeal. Let him oppose to irresolution this new and self-created *I*. Let him oppose to distraction—that unhappy division of the soul—concentration; and meet ill-humour with firm resolution. Let the child of habit tear himself from this nurse; and those who are the play of the movement inure themselves to acting from a sense of duty. Let us strive to develop the power of our thoughts—to direct the understanding towards ourselves. What was self-government in the will, here becomes self-knowledge. Let us cultivate this side of our mental faculties by studying the genuine science of life, and thus learn to comprehend by its fruits the divine character of knowledge, and of harmonious cultivation. The highest knowledge, by teaching us to incorporate the idea of the individual with that of the universe,

leads us to religion, from which we derive that perfect self-renunciation which alone can impart the lasting cheerfulness necessary to produce health. None but those who are of little account in their own eyes can attain to greatness. Let all, then, pray devoutly for a "pure heart and great thoughts." Peace within and without is the first, the most indispensable remedy for all the evils of this life, both internal and external. In most cases it effects a sovereign cure—in others it is useful as an accessory; in all it is invaluable as a means of prevention. This peace, which is the child of the mind, is more readily obtained from a study of Nature than from any other science. Considered in a dietetic point of view, Nature is a safer school than history; for the latter is often dangerous to those of tender feelings, and may excite painful impressions or impassioned impulses. We should always endeavour to balance the individual temperament by some counteracting impulse—presenting intellectual labour to the active, and practical realities to those who are suffering.

We must not kill our passions. Their destruction would involve that of the mysterious germ and essence of all the springs of life and

health. We must rather learn to counteract, to moderate, and to govern them by and through themselves. Active passions must be held under control; the more negative must be cultivated. Courage—Cheerfulness—Hope—these three stars should form a constellation, ever before our eyes. We must educate ourselves through the agency of our respective inclinations. It is through them that God educates us; and what is the aim of mental dietetics but the education of the body through the agency of the mind?

This mental condition will be promoted by an alternation of impressions conformable to the laws which govern the oscillations of our existence, and which constitute the fundamental principles of mental dietetics. The wise man knows how to repress or to excite by turns joy and sorrow, tension and relaxation, meditation and folly, as the painter knows how to handle his colours; and he who has made such progress in this art of self-treatment as to have ventured, at certain times, to invoke the Eumenides of gravity, of painful reminiscence, or of care, will seldom taste the poison of inward sickness.

This would seem a fitting place to notice the

influence which the alternating course of days and hours—such as morning, noon and evening—exercises on the condition of the body, and what corresponding treatment it calls for in mental dietetics. But I must content myself with these general remarks. To the victim of hypochondriasis I have but this advice to give. Turn your clouded sight from the narrow sphere of your own miserable tortured self, to the boundless theatre of suffering or rejoicing humanity; forget your own miseries in sympathy with your fellow men; or, at least, deserve the sympathy of others.

These are holy duties, which the great movements of the present day render incumbent on us all; and they are more easy of fulfilment than the *blasé* egoist, or the slave of habit can conceive. As a highly gifted poet and physician observes, “Do we not feel ourselves when we feel for others?” In the glory of ever-renovating and ever-living Nature, the unhappy will find the consolation vouchsafed and prepared for all human beings; and in the conflicting maze of characters and destinies will he discover the place he was destined to fill. After this discovery nothing remains for him but to be and

remain what his being prompts him to be—pure and truthful as the incorruptible word of God. Health is nothing but beauty, morality and truth.

I have now arrived at the point from whence I started. May the same animating feelings of confidence and conviction which have filled my heart while writing these pages, be as a blessing to those who desire, by self-improvement, to qualify themselves for carrying out their destiny upon earth, and to prepare themselves for the felicity of a future life.

PASSAGES FROM A DIARY.

Condo et compono, quæ mox depromere possim.

HORACE.

PASSAGES FROM A DIARY.

POEMS, novels, and plays have a manifest advantage over didactic works. They do not weary by systematic discussions, but stimulate the reader to think for himself on the problems which they present to him. In the preceding pages I may have been tiresome; in the following I trust to attain some of the advantages which I have ascribed to the poet or novelist. Aphorisms are more calculated to stimulate than to satisfy—to excite than to give knowledge.

I.

To the observant mind life presents on all sides tasks to be executed, problems to be solved. Works of merit and men of experience accomplish one and the same result. We should seek

everywhere for the sources of rest and strength. Whatever we thus select, appropriate, and assimilate to ourselves, is as much our property as anything of which we may believe ourselves the authors.

II.

No one invents anything. While man thinks, he merely gives activity to the one law of thought which is inherent in him, and in all others. An atmosphere of truth surrounds him, and to this he only returns what he has drawn from it—*expiring* and *inspiring* knowledge.

III.

Goethe's remark, "That an excessively tender conscience, overrating its own importance, may induce hypochondriasis, unless counterbalanced by great activity," is both important and suggestive in reference to the present subject.

IV.

So likewise is the observation of another German author—"We cannot maintain body and mind in perfect health, unless we learn from youth upwards to take part in the ordinary occupations of our fellow men."

V.

It is necessary to maintain a balance in all things both within and without us. Contentment produces this equilibrium in matters connected with animal existence; alternate activity and repose, in things connected with our irritability; and pleasure, in reference to our sensations. This is our law.

VI.

The possession of a vigorous understanding and of a moral character will alone enable us to maintain calmness of mind in moments of excitement. This is a species of Archimedean point from which we exercise the active power of contemplation; where thought and being become united—an union constituting the true happiness of man.

VII.

Passion would always be suitable if it were always commensurable.

VIII.

I have often observed myself with attention, and found that even when the head is most

bewildered, thought remains pure and free, like some force which has retired unscathed to its stronghold before the enemy. A field for action was all that was wanting. It could not, as it were, be perceived.

IX.

Some thoughts are heating ; some are cooling. They do not bear the same relation as glad and mournful thoughts, for both may be either.

X.

Doubt, the most fearful of all feelings, is put to flight by despair, which often proves its best remedy.

XI.

There are moments—blissful moments—during which we may exclaim, “The body has lost all consciousness of self in its subordination to the mind. The free current of our powers flows like a sea between a visible and an invisible land.”

Happy, in body and mind, is he to whom such moments are granted ; happy the man who can invoke them at will, and can moderate their intensity by reflection.

Nature heals the wounds she inflicts. But when man injures himself, can he expect that she should flatter him with sympathy, as the mother does her spoiled child?

The calm of the universe—the meandering stream—the still forest—the blue sky—the general harmony of Nature's eternal beauty—are not these sufficient to pour oil into your wounded spirit?

Is it not more noble, more conformable with Nature's laws, to merge our small individual discord in her harmonious unison, than to spoil the latter by it?

XII.

The art of prolonging life? No. Rather teach him who knows what life is, the art of enduring it.

XIII.

The whole secret of prolonging life consists in not shortening it.

XIV.

To turn activity to proper account we must bear three points in view.

1. It must be methodical—without rest, but without haste.

2. It must choose the fitting object, at the fitting time—not "*invitâ Minervâ.*"

3. It must act alternately by repose and by a change of objects; for our minds are so constituted that a change of objects brings nearly as much relief as actual repose.

XV.

Shall we select enjoyment, repose, or toil?

Let invigorating activity properly alternate with the pleasure which follows it.

XVI.

It is easy to perceive that those views of life which deify pleasure, are less likely to yield it than those which do not so highly estimate enjoyment. The former infallibly render life weary; the latter cure us of this weariness.

XVII.

Compassion affords no benefit to persons who are right-minded; it only weakens them. Duty is the upright man's true consolation.

A longing for the infinite, is a misconception of the finite. To lament our not being under-

stood by others, is to misunderstand the aim of humanity, which is not external.

XVIII.

Mental sufferings are too often penances—the natural fruits of our not being faithful to Nature.

XIX.

When men of cultivated understandings neglect mental activity, they are misled by the theory that life receives and maintains its vitality from without. The life of man has been converted into an abstract nonentity, which a certain medical school terms irritability. But life acts from within, not from without. "*Mens agitat molem.*"

XX.

The acts of assimilation and excretion, of inspiration and expiration, which are necessary for bodily life, should be mentally repeated. Systole and diastole are equally necessary to the health of spiritual existence. We dilate our whole being; we learn, act, and enjoy; we pass beyond our own sphere; but the eternal pulsations of destiny drive us back, and compel

us to concentrate our forces on a single point from which they may again diffuse. Constant expansion will destroy any power by excessive attenuation; constant contraction will destroy it by rendering it torpid.

XXI.

The interest we feel in life is derived from constant observation, constant thought, and constant instruction. These ever maintain within our life, currents which prevent it from putrefying. And it may be said, as of love and error, that they who cease to strive, or cease to learn, may as well cease to live.

XXII.

“Oh, what a noble mind is here o’erthrown!”

What deep and chastened sorrow is expressed in these words? Abnegation seems to struggle with the eternal, and to be unable to contain itself. No sorrow is more frequent at the present day than this. Oh! that all good and gentle natures would learn to fortify themselves with that material hardness which is so necessary in our struggle with the powers of this world.

XXIII.

Patience has been granted as a shield to gentleness. Impatience often prepares the downfall of strength.

XXIV.

Patience,—thou earnest sister of hope—beneficent balm of the mind—wondrous force of the will, which consisteth in *not* willing! thou art ever acting through suffering. What unfortunate has not, in blissful moments, experienced thy magic? The paroxysm of fever flies before thy presence; but returns with redoubled force when thou hast forsaken the bed of sickness. Thou canst assuage the keenest suffering and accelerate the most tedious cure. Thou alone art strong in thy weakness; thou, the most complete, the most gentle, the most beauteous manifestation of mind as a healing agent.

XXV.

Hypochondriasis is egoism. Poets, accustomed as they are to explore the recesses of their own hearts—to analyze their own feelings, and to regard themselves as the centre of the

universe, are most subject to the attacks of this demon.

I knew one of these nobly but unhappily gifted beings, who could obtain no rest from his torments save by the study of history, and by sympathy with the general world. He would have been cured had he commenced in time.

XXVI.

The fearful germ of insanity slumbers in every man's mind. Watch and strive with all cheerful activity that it awake not from its slumber.

XXVII.

Scepticism—the sombre, petty scepticism of the worldling is weakness. The feeble retreat before difficulties which the bold encounter and overcome by faith. Half-informed dabblers in medicine are generally sceptics.

XXVIII.

Apathy is not desirable. We should rather excite and foster pure and noble passions. Cultivate the beautiful. The virtue and health of man are nourished by beauty.

XXIX.

An active performance of our duties is the mother of a pure conscience. The latter, again, is the parent of peace; and in peace alone can flourish the tender flower of earthly happiness.

XXX.

It is less necessary to keep the understanding always clear (and who can do so?) than to preserve a steady frame of mind, and know how to elevate it when about to sink.

XXXI.

Knowledge gives a disposition, and destroys a disposition.

XXXII.

Precipitate men should accustom themselves to write and walk slowly. The irresolute should endeavour to perform their acts with rapidity. The gloomy romantic dreamer should be trained to walk with head erect, to look others straight in the face, to speak in a loud, distinct tone of voice. It may seem incredible; but I can affirm from personal experience that such habits exercise a great influence both on mind and body.

XXXIII.

It is not enough to contemplate ourselves objectively; we must also treat ourselves in the same way.

XXXIV.

Seek those habits which give thee strength; which develop thy vital activity. Avoid as poisons those which leave behind them debility and emptiness.

XXXV.

Regard sufferings as if given to prove us the fairest and most fruitful anthropomorphism. They strengthen us and render us moral.

XXXVI.

Nature has allotted to man a decisive and absorbing activity; to woman a passive life. But neither can be pursued to excess without danger.

XXXVII.

Books are spectacles through which we contemplate the world. They are necessary for weak eyes; but the sight is better maintained by looking at life without such assistance.

XXXVIII.

We require a robust morality, not a morbid sentimentality.

XXXIX.

What we strongly hope for is accomplished.
A bold, yet a comforting statement.

XL.

Sorrow springs from within and undermines the human frame. Vexation which arises from without, most readily restores the disturbed balance.

XLI.

If we can concentrate the attention on any given point, either by friendly conversation, reading, or through memory, or duty, the bitter stings of internal sorrow and external pain will be removed. This occurs with the greatest certainty in cases where such a direction of the mind is effected through the agency of others, and unconsciously to ourselves.

XLII.

"Profound thought," says Heppel, "accustoms the mind to a species of existence which is

external to the body. It thus prepares for it a way to that wider field of action which is destined for all mankind."

XLIII.

Abstraction and distraction avail nothing. The best and only way of abstracting the mind from one object is to fix it upon another.

XLIV.

We can only afford negative proof of anything by giving positive proof of something else. This law is of great importance with respect not only to mental dietetics, but to life in general. Whatever is vulgar, bad, false, or uncomely, can be negatived in no other way than by demonstrating the noble, the good, the true, and the beautiful. It is a fatal error to regard the former qualities as actual existences, and to combat them as such. We must regard them as nonentities, and substitute some reality in their place.

XLV.

A moderate optimism—such as would result from a true philosophy of life—appertains to the science of mental dietetics. The man dissatis-

fied with the world will be so with himself, so as to be continually eaten up by his own ill-humour. And in such a state of mind how can he retain health?

XLVI.

We have all, at one time or another, experienced some unexpected blessing. Remember this when thou art disposed to despair of the future. Memory will then become, as the poet says, "the nurse of hope."

XLVII.

We should treat ourselves as Reil did his patients,—the incurable lost life, but never hope.

XLVIII.

The power of maintaining the life of the individual against the influence of the universal, depends on energy; and all the energy which we can give to ourselves depends on education. There are several varieties of energy—the inert (*vis inertiae*)—the unyielding—the quiet—the firm—the obstinate—the impulsive—the suffering—the gentle—the impetuous—the cheerful

—and others which unite in themselves many of these criteria.

XLIX.

The distinct faculties of the mind, as reason, volition, imagination, &c., differ in character from energy. Considered as a general expression, energy is limited to the aggregate result of these, and to that inborn individual force of the living being with the origin of which we are unacquainted.

L.

Neither these precepts nor our duty to others can prevent men from sometimes being “out of tune.” The strings of the violin are occasionally deranged by atmospheric and other changes. This is inevitable. It may be difficult to play well on such an instrument; yet the virtuoso succeeds until string after string loses its harmonious tone, and all at length are mute.

LI.

We cannot avoid moodiness; but we may turn to account, as does the poet, the various dispositions of the mind—or give them form and shape, as the sculptor his marble.

LII.

Taken in this point of view, we should permit such dispositions unconsciously to pursue their course. Whether they bring joy or sorrow, they belong to the twilight of our condition. "There are," as Rahel says, "parentheses in our own lives which give us a freedom that would never be conceded in more lucid moments. Would any one desire to infect himself with a nervous fever? Yet it may save life. But it comes on spontaneously."

LIII.

Ilately experienced, in a most forcible manner, how disposition may be influenced as by daylight. I awoke from sleep without knowing the hour. My night-lamp appeared to be burning with unusual brightness. The solemn, gloomy thoughts which usually occupy my mind at night, now returned, and rendered sleep impossible. The clock struck five, and I perceived that I had mistaken bright daylight for the shining of my lamp: my whole frame of mind became changed in an instant. The objects which, a moment before, oppressed me, now stood forth in cheerful colours

and revived courage within my breast. I *felt* the change like a shock in my brain.

Emotions are like the glowing rays of the setting sun; or like coloured glasses, through which we see the world in false and magical beauty.

LIV.

“I hardly know, but I think I should be less frightened by this transparent stream, than by the black poison before me.” So exclaims a girl on the stage, who is about to poison herself, while looking on a river. She gives us an useful lesson; for we determine things by the colour which we impute to them.

LV.

Man's life has its dawn; then comes daylight, when lamps are no longer wanted. Every one worthy of the name of *man* passed through this period of inner birth when consciousness commenced. But to count every spoke in the wheels of the machine is contrary to nature. We are not only made up of brain, but of heart and hand. When the eye has fastened on its object, the body requires no afterthought for its

movement. The flower blooms and the fruit ripens unconsciously.

LVI.

Idleness is the fundamental error of man. It undermines his well-being in a thousand ways. In the refined it is disguised in a gloomy, sceptical view of life, which we may typically denominate *Hamletism*. It is a renunciation of oneself—a voluntary disease and death. Health and life are the fruits of self-awakening.

LVII.

If reason were all-powerful, we should not have possessed the faculties of feeling and imagination.

LVIII.

Body and mind are steeled and hardened by alternations of heat and cold—of joy and sorrow. Thus Nature and Poetry educate their noblest children by purifying them.

LIX.

Knowledge lends no interest to life;—it rather discloses its nothingness. Imagination and feeling excite sympathy for its passing events,

and thus yield happiness. Hence art is a healthier effort than philosophy.

LX.

An idea cannot satisfy, stimulate, or tranquillize man. This is only effected by that indescribable sentiment which is best understood through its effects on other things—best learned and exerted through itself.

It has been well remarked of the poems of Hafiz that their refreshing influence does not depend so much on the sense of the words, as on the tone of mind produced in the reader.

LXI.

Nothing protects us better from the fearful spectre of old age, and from that ossification of our being which announces or accompanies it, than a cheerful tone of scepticism; one not relating to eternal truth, but to oneself. Perpetual youth arises from a continued avoidance of a one-sided view of self.

LXII.

A good man should always have some good work in hand—some task requiring the joint

application of all his powers. Life is a more or less powerful effort: while every act of relaxation is a sickness—a death.

LXIII.

Composition, even when we have no idea of appearing in print, is an excellent dietetic tonic. In these civilized times almost every one may indulge in it.

The best and quickest mode of banishing a painful impression, or a torturing feeling, is to give it expression in words. We thus relieve the mind from present, and fortify it against future pangs.

LXIV.

That philosophy which devotes itself to a contemplation of death is a false one. True philosophy is a living wisdom, for which there is no death.

LXV.

True happiness and genuine virtue are based upon self-guidance.

LXVI.

Self-contemplation of our mental and bodily condition, must teach every one that his senti-

ments are rather regulated by his impressions than the latter by the former.

LXVII.

Passion is actual suffering—a well-regulated life, true activity; for in the one case our inner being suffers, while in the other it works. The more activity becomes habit—an element of ourselves—the more will it protect us from suffering. Suffering depresses; action elevates; exaltation animates. The partial or complete absence of excitement brings disease and death.

LXVIII.

The latest periods of life are influenced by the errors of our earliest years. The same may be said of early acquired advantages.

LXIX.

I must will; I will must. He who has learned to comprehend the one, and practice the other, has mastered the whole science of mental dietetics.

LXX.

To preserve or improve health we must learn how to analyze all actions and conditions.

Solitude is profitable; but we must not seek to be alone in society.

LXXI.

What strength would arise from combining the rapid action of youth with the maturity of advanced life! Endeavour to preserve the former; and as the latter must arrive of itself, the time draws nigh when your wish will be accomplished.

LXXII.

When a man strives with all his power for a certain object he will attain it. For desire is only an expression of that which is conformable to our being. To him who knocks it shall be opened. We find daily examples of adventurers who have striven for wealth or fame, and gained them. Why should it be otherwise for health?

LXXIII.

We must repress, at an early period, the freshness and youthful ardour of our feelings, to revive them when subsequently strengthened by prudence and experience.

LXXIV.

If trials afflict or threaten, remember that

you cannot escape them by flight. Look steadfastly upon them, and decide whether they should be disregarded or turned to account. You must master an object before you attempt to despise it. When a difficulty is turned aside it is certain to return with increased force. The spectres of the night are only dissipated by the light of day.

LXXV.

The will cannot act in a decided manner without cultivation; but it must not gain the ascendancy over us. While self-cultivation is as yet incomplete, we ought to be capable of promoting our own good by arousing the general energy. Intelligence is a higher faculty than volition; for the latter requires cultivation to fulfil its commission.

LXXVI.

“But I cannot *will*, without having something to will, and I must first know what this something is.” Granted—but this knowledge does not require understanding. We know what we will—in a general sense—though we know it but too seldom in a strict sense. The idea cannot exist without experience; but experience

may be attained before, and therefore without any idea.

LXXVII.

There can be no consciousness of an internal void, since such a state is a nonentity. This void, however, often becomes condensed; and then it is felt. This sensation is a commencement of cure; for an effort to remove it becomes a necessity.

LXXVIII.

Persons rolling in boundless wealth who do not understand the great art of enjoying life richly, and have no ennobling pursuits, succumb under the weight of their enjoyments or desires. They pine in vain for some object which may be capable of sufficiently resisting their powers.

LXXIX.

As there is a point in the eye insensible to light, so there is a dark point in the mind which envelops the germ of all that may undermine us from within. All depends on our circumscribing this point by cheerfulness and morality so that it shall become invisible. If allowed to exceed its limits, it expands, until the mind is

overcast with shadows, and the night of insanity closes over the wretched sufferer.

LXXX.

The mind has, also, its bright point—a hidden sanctuary of clearness and serenity whither no storms or nightly shadows can penetrate. Here should be our resting-place—our home. Its preservation and enlargement should be a constant object of our care. Even insanity—according to Jean Paul—cannot erase this bright spot from the mind.

LXXXI.

It has never been determined with what degree of mental disturbance insanity commences.

LXXXII.

Power has been often confounded with feeling. At the present day the latter is cultivated to excess; while the former, which contains the germ of health, is suffered to lie fallow. We have a feeling for all things—strength for nothing.

LXXXIII.

Human existence will ever have its discordant

notes. They make themselves heard in spite of all reasoning to the contrary. It is more prudent to recognise them, and to enjoy those bright hours when, either in action or in love, we anticipate an harmonious unison.

LXXXIV.

Man may gradually master every condition, either by his reason or by assimilation ;—just as the economy may become accustomed to poisons.

LXXXV.

Memory grows under the shadow of reflection. An object becomes indifferent when we speak of it constantly ; for the desire of meditating on it in solitude is thus prevented.

LXXXVI.

A healthy condition is best maintained by an adequate appreciation and cultivation of the advantages appertaining to the several periods of life. Freshness and vigorous impulse belong to youth ; wise moderation to manhood ; calm reflection to old age. Dilatory consideration is as injurious to the young as unseasonable impetuosity to the grey-headed. Kind Nature allots

a fitting fruit and flower to every season of life.

LXXXVII.

Constant attention to the host of neglected but ever-recurring pleasures which every hour brings with it, is also profitable.

How many agreeable emotions, the recollection of which would be a permanent pleasure, are allowed to pass unheeded every day! Gentle, intellectual persons have often expressed this sentiment. With Jean Paul we should learn to weigh every success—every realized wish. With Goëthe, to sing the praise of nature, whose every pulsation inspires new life. With Hölderlin, to bless the privilege of enjoying the light of the sun. With Hippel, to accept each recurring day as an unmerited favour.

LXXXVIII.

A[†] pure and noble selfishness is necessary for health and cheerfulness. That man is to be pitied who does not labour, love, and live for his own love and gratitude. We seldom derive any pure enjoyment from external objects. All man's actions bear their own fruits—and that without fail—be they good or evil.

LXXXIX.

Mental happiness is derived from extending our internal sphere of action and possession. Ask any man of cultivated mind when he enjoyed true happiness? He will answer—In the glorious age of youthful development, when every day unfolded to his mind new worlds, and new spheres of thought. The older we grow, the rarer are these opportunities of happiness. Worldly knowledge has its visible limits; and is not the old man blessed only in fixing his thoughts beyond them?

XC.

The distinction between men of ordinary and gifted minds is this:—the former are only happy when they forget themselves, the latter only when they contemplate themselves; the former when they lose, the latter when they possess themselves completely.

XCI.

Betake thyself with thy morbid wavering spirit—with thy doubts and fears—to society. A chance word will often, like a flash of lightning, clear up the most appalling darkness.

XCII.

We are often the least indulgent to those who are nearest and dearest to us. The same holds good with regard to them. Consider this well and frequently. It is an excellent prophylactic. My object is to give the mind a healthy and true direction; to develop and emancipate it by my observations; to render this little work a means of imparting wholesome and exciting vigour to the mind.

XCIII.

It would be pedantic and irrelevant if I were to point out every individual thing which the *will* can effect in the everyday occurrences and actions of life.

XCIV.

Medical experience abundantly proves that anger is capable of increasing the bilious secretion, or altering its quality; that fright acts on the nerves distributed to the heart; that fear and hatred produce cold, joy, heat; that anxiety excites palpitation of the heart; that repugnance and disgust occasion fainting. Laughing and crying are special provisions of Nature for our well-being. The latter often constitutes

a crisis in many complicated affections. Sneezing, yawning, and sighing are, at least negatively, under our control; yet the most remarkable, and, at the same time, the most ordinary effects of these acts scarcely admit of being expressed in words; although any one who will resolutely make the attempt will find to his astonishment that all I have said of the influence of the will over the body is founded on fact.

XCV.

It has been said that the aspect of what is beautiful—as the verdant hue of the meadow, or the deep azure of the sky—exerts a beneficial influence on the organs of sight.

XCVI.

The ancients were unacquainted with hypochondriasis or hysteria. Let us rival the Greeks in nobleness, and the Romans in vigour—these affections may then likewise become strangers to us.

XCVII.

Hypochondriasis consists not only in imagining evils which we have not, but in dwelling too earnestly on those which we have.

XCVIII.

Persons labouring under mental affections should only record in their note-book consoling thoughts wherewith to solace their darker hours. Such a book may prove a friend, at least as necessary as the physician.

XCIX.

In applying mental dietetics to practice, we must always take into account the patient's age. Every period of life has its peculiar desires and impulses. Let the youth follow the impetuous aspirations of his mind; here a certain dietetic license, giving full sway for development, is conformable to the design of Nature. In middle life, as steadiness of character increases, let habit assume the command. In old age, let the same law of habit, as the symbol of durability, be held sacred. Nature established a beautiful law, when she ordained that memory should ever be a friendly power, bearing the joys, but not the woes, of each epoch to the one which succeeds it.

C.

What is the past? Thyself. But it is nothing

which thou canst retain. It is but the germ which it has implanted in thy being, and which is gradually developed with it. What is the future? Likewise thyself. It only regards thee, in so far as it is thy task to develop thyself to it. In every other sense memory and hope are the delusions of a dream—and to yield oneself to them is but the pampering of feeling.

CI.

The way seems ever shorter when we return than when we set out. Thus it is with our advance in years. And this appearance can only be avoided by our regarding old age as a path which leads onward.

CII.

Hufeland considered married life—Kant, celibacy—as the more conducive to longevity. Both appealed to experience—the one citing examples of married persons who attained a great age, the other referring to the healthy appearance of old bachelors. The solution of the problem is probably to be sought in the fact, that in the one case vital energy is preserved by the abstinence of celibacy during the earlier periods

of life; while in the other, the enfeebled frame is fostered during old age by domestic care.

CIII.

Life is no dream. It only becomes so by the fault of man, and when his mind disobeys the summons to awake.

CIV.

A soft elegiac disposition, indulged in from time to time, exercises a refreshing influence, like the aspect of the moon. We should therefore endeavour to convert sullen and peevish moods into sadness. A few tears may become a healing balsam for indurated wounds.

CV.

What profound and upright man is ever satisfied with himself? Dissatisfaction with oneself, however, undermines our powers. We must bring down our duties to such a level as shall enable us to fulfil them with certainty.

CVI.

Prietsch informs us that he had acquired by habit the power of exciting at will such symptoms

as *muscæ volitantes*, ringing in the ears, &c. Justinus Kerner can diminish the frequency of the pulsations of his heart, whenever he wishes. Phthisical and dropsical complaints are often the result of mental affections; and hence we find that the process of absorption necessary for their cure is promoted by activity and a happy condition of mind. I have often witnessed this; and so must every practical physician. Hufeland's advice to regulate the daily excretions at will is well known and judicious. I would also add the following counsel, though it belongs rather to physical dietetics. While engaged in reading or writing, acts during which we are apt to hold in the breath without being conscious of it, we should frequently make deep inspirations, rise from the table and take a few turns across the room. When occupied with any matter requiring close attention, we should close the eyes every now and then for a few minutes. The physician will understand the reasons for this advice; and the non-professional reader will do well to follow it.

CVII.

The descriptions of their sufferings which

hypochondriacs give with so much accuracy are merely expressions of a general condition, only felt with undue acuteness, in consequence of the debility and extreme irritability of mind and body under which the individual labours.

CVIII.

I have written much about the power of volition; but in mental affections, where compulsion only causes friction, the power of *not* willing is the one we should cultivate. We should abandon ourselves to resignation, form no plans, and look on the future in no other light than in that of hope.

CIX.

It is a curious fact that vague impressions generally act with greater certainty than definite ones. Thus we awake from sleep at some hour determined upon the day before, &c., yet he whose clearly defined purposes are strongest, is in the best bodily and mental condition.

CX.

Kant has justly remarked that activity of the imagination is a mental motion conducive to

health. The special activity of the understanding is an exhausting action ; while pure contemplation converts the mind into a mass of stagnant water, from whose surface objects are accurately reflected, but which gradually passes into a state of putrefaction.

CXI.

With equal truth has he pointed out the injurious influence of midnight vigils. The imagination, most active at that period, stimulates the nervous system too highly.

CXII.

Lichtenberg—the most delicate delineator of mental conditions—the Columbus of hypochondriasis—has bequeathed to us some very useful hints. “We often lie down in such unnatural positions, that we experience considerable pain from pressure ; but the uneasiness caused by this pain is slight, because we are conscious that we can relieve it at will.” He invents the most appropriate names for hypochondriasis—“pathological egoism,” “pusillanimity.” “My body is the only part of the universe which my thoughts can alter ; in every other place the

order of things remains unaffected by my fancies." Again he says—"In 1789, I laboured under nervous disorder; when I placed my fingers in my ears I felt much better, because I could then fancy that the singing which distressed me was artificially produced."

The hypochondriac who can imbibe poison from everything he touches, would do well to derive consolation from these remarks.

CXIII.

Medical men are often affected with an involuntary species of hypochondriasis. This latter, as I have before observed, is a microscope with which we detect the minutest and otherwise invisible ailments of the body. But medical men necessarily have this microscope in their knowledge of disease, which reveals all the possible causes, complications, and results of every malady.

CXIV.

If it be true, as wise men say, that enjoyment and forgetfulness of self, form one and the same art; they must also be the same as that art which teaches us to concentrate our strivings on some all-engrossing object.

CXV.

When we analyze the moment of enjoyment we find that, like all other human conditions, it is of a twofold nature—forgetfulness of self, and the fullest possession of self—a heightened existence and an emancipation from existence—a contradiction, like man himself, yet no contradiction; for that from which we free ourselves is the chains, and that which we feel heightened is the freedom of life.

CXVI.

“How can I *will*, dear doctor, since the power to will is the very one in which I am deficient?”

“When the remedy you require, dear patient, is yourself, what can I prescribe but yourself?”

CXVII.

We are weary of the world. If this expression mean that we have felt the deficiencies of this life, the sentiment should act as a stimulus on us, and excite us to supply these deficiencies by developing the action of our faculties.

Let all who yield to the feeling bear this in mind.

CXVIII.

He who thinks himself inwardly diseased becomes hypochondriacally unhappy; while he who pronounces himself healthy through mere levity and defiance, may become unhappy by neglect. The right course lies between these two extremes. We should regard ourselves as valetudinarians, for that we all are, and live in a cautious manner, content with our condition.

CXIX.

The impulse towards a sanative mental activity should, in many instances, where we have no business to think of sorrow, emanate from others; who, so far, act as our physicians. It would be too much to require the impulse from the sufferer himself. Yet, on the other hand, who knows a man's disease as well as himself? Or who feels so well the favourable moment for administering a remedy? Let the patient, then, take council with himself, and see what can be done.

CXX.

Life may be considered and regulated in two ways; and this holds good for mental dietetics

as well as for every other form of human effort. We may either consider ourselves as a central point, and endeavour to maintain life against the influence of external agents, seeking to increase our powers by the development of character—a mode which may be termed the *subjective* or *moral* (Kant).

Or, we may abandon ourselves freely to the world and endeavour to assimilate ourselves to external things, considering and treating ourselves as a portion of the universal whole—a mode which we may term the *objective* or *poetic* (Goëthe).

The single and normal character of Nature make these opposite methods tend to the same object; even as the poles are attracted towards each other.

For the individual who will but rightly develop the subjective in himself, will promote the grand aim of the universal *whole*, whose parts are all subjectively related to it; and he who faithfully reflects the objects around him, will learn to understand his own nature and so regain individuality by this sacrifice of self.

Either method may be followed with advantage; but each is suited to a special character,

like the special mode of thought pertaining to the individual.

This remark will explain any apparent contradiction in the counsels which I have offered during the course of this work. Their object is to aid and solace all according to their several necessities.

CXXI.

To every man is prescribed a special path in life by which he is to attain the general goal. My nature prompts me to view things from a moral point; and this tendency has perhaps pervaded my remarks more largely than their nature may seem to require. The only question, however, is, What are our necessities?

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